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Never before published: uncanny facts about men and women, places and things, that are *cursed!*

STRANGE HEXES

Fully documented by Warren Smith

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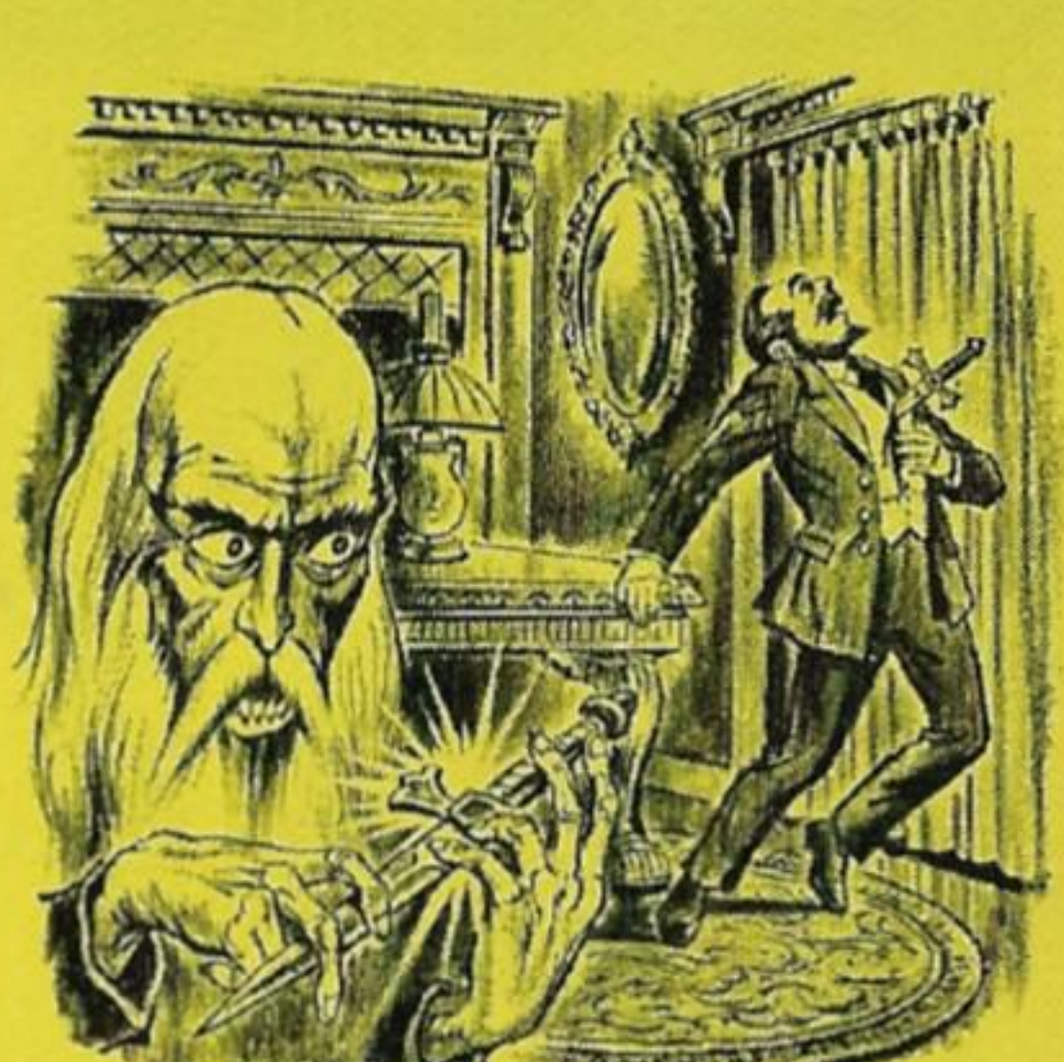
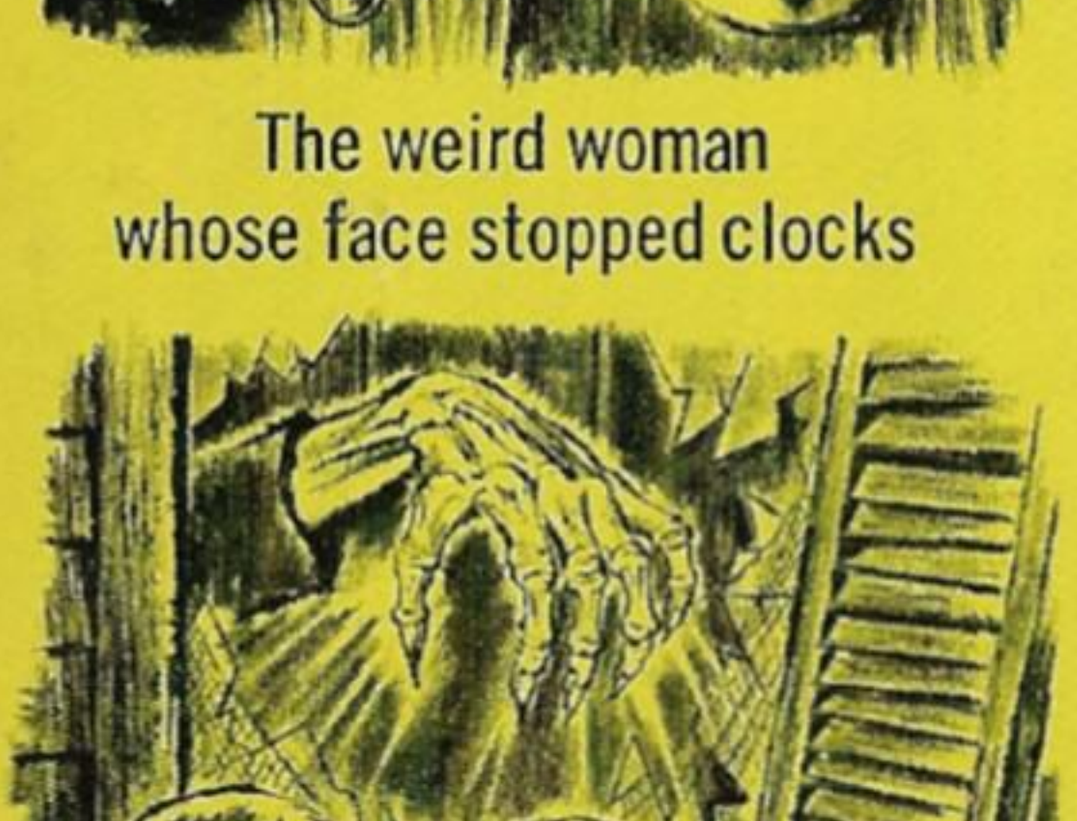


The cutlery curse—deadly revenge to the point



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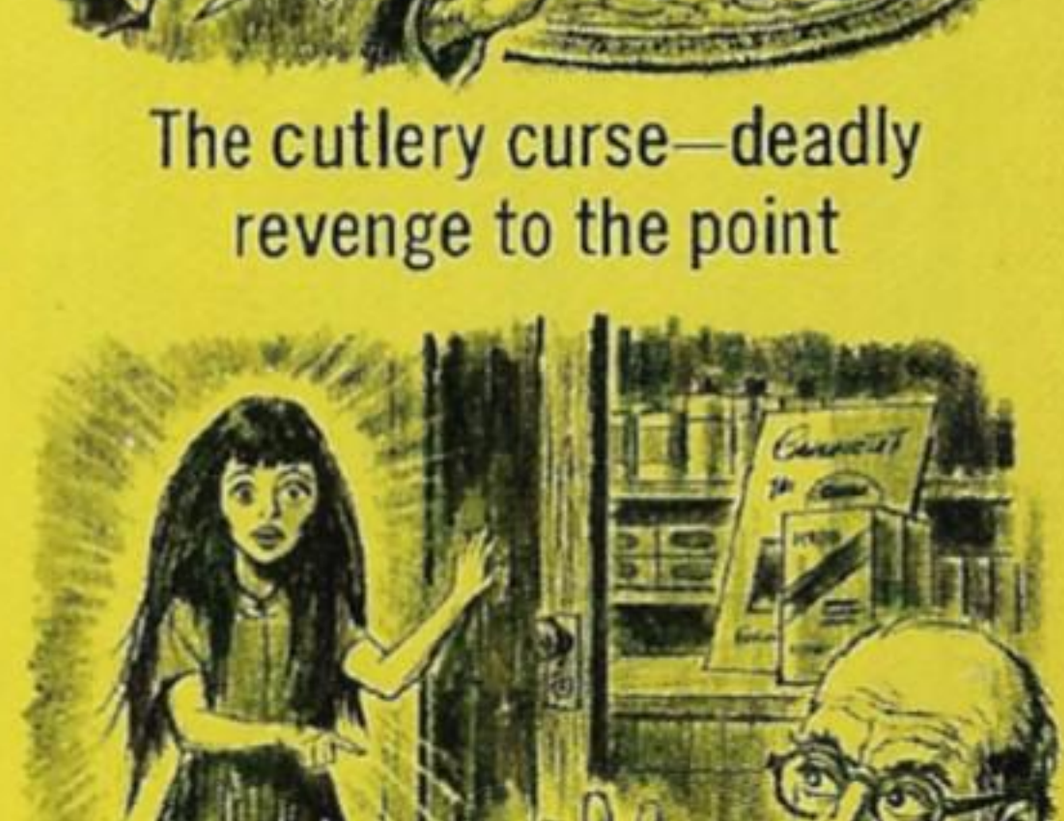

The child-witch and her evil-eye watch

THE HEXED MAILMAN—he was led down a strange route

THE HAUNTED GRAVEDIGGER—his obsessive dreams drove him to his own grave

THE CRAZY MIXED-UP JINXED WHEELCHAIR —it had a will of its own

THE NEVERGREEN TREE—possessed by the men who had hung from its limbs

also THE SPOOK IN THE DARKROOM,

THE CLOCK THAT MOANED,

THE HUNGRY WALLET,

THE GOODLUCK PIPE,

THE CURSED KNEE,

THE HEXED HOUSEWIFE,

and more . . .

STRANGE HEXES

Fully documented by Warren Smith

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CHIEF TECUMSEH'S EERIE EARTHQUAKE HEX

Chief Tecumseh, the proud Shawnee Indian leader, was a noble warrior and, according to his red brothers, a powerful *shamen* who hexed anyone who opposed his tribe. Many Indians believed that Tecumseh could stamp his feet on the ground and create a devastating earthquake. Others swore the Shawnee chieftain was in league with the old gods of antiquity. "Tecumseh commands the devils who dwell in the inner earth," said the *shamen,* or medicine men.

In 1811, Chief Tecumseh and his twin brother, a medicine man known as Tenskatawa the Prophet, attempted to create an alliance among the American Indian tribes. "The combined might of our people can drive the white man from our lands and back into the sea," declared the Shawnee chieftain. "Unless we fight together, the white men will take our lands."

"It won't be easy," suggested Tenskawatawa the Prophet. "The tribes fight with each other for land. Old feuds and bitter memories will be difficult to erase."

"I will go to each of the tribal chiefs," explained Tecumseh. "I will meet in council with the elders of each tribe. I will convince them that an Indian nation is our only hope."

In the months that followed, Chief Tecumseh and his companions rushed across the land. They smoked the pipe of peace with the plains Indians, eating chunks of Buffalo meat and listening to the feathered Sioux warriors boast of their exploits. They rode through the parched southwest and, at a sacred valley of the Apache, conferred with leaders of that tribe. The scudding clouds of winter were in the skies when Tecumseh and his weary warriors met with a small tribe of Indians on the Alabama bluffs of the Mississippi river.

"I pledge a great victory if you fight with us," Tecumseh promised.

The chief of the Alabama Indians spat contemptuously at his visitor's feet. "Promises are like the wind," he announced in a taut, sharp voice. "The wind is free. Talk is nothing."

Tecumseh glared at the Alabama chief. "You are cowards who hide in your wig-wams while your squaws fight," he snapped, angrily. "I do not want women. I want warriors. I will leave your miserable dog camp and return to my people at Detroit. When I arrive at my own campfire, I will shake the dirt of your cursed land from my mocassins. When I stamp the ground, the earth will tremble and shake down all of your wig-wams. You will remember Tecumseh!"

Shortly after Tecumseh departed from the Alabama encampment, the great earthquake of 1811 struck with brutal force on December 16, 1811. Terrified Indians in Alabama rushed from their shaking wigwams and trembling lodges and out onto a rolling, heaving earth.

"Aii! Chief Tecumseh has stamped his feet at Detroit," wailed the medicine men.

Could it be that Tecumseh's hex and the earthquake that followed was nothing more than sheer coincidence? The Indians who gazed over the devastation along the Mississippi Valley came to another conclusion. This vicious earth upheaval was final proof of Tecumseh's power as a *shamen*. The earthquake was the most violent in the history of the United States. The Mississippi river flowed backwards for three hours as steamboats were dashed to bits. The frontier community of New Madrid, Missouri, plunged beneath the murky river waters. More than 40,000 square miles of land dropped or rose from ten to fifty feet, twisting under the ferocious pressures. Thousands of people fell into gaping earth chasms. Fractures in the earth's crust swallowed up entire herds of livestock.

Despite his stature as a mighty medicine man, a master of the hex, there was little tribute for Chief Tecumseh. His brother, Tenskwatawa the Prophet, longed for ancient glories. Shawnee warriors attacked an encampment of Willian Henry Harrison's Indiana militia at a site near La-Fayette. Shawnee blood drenched the ground at the famous "Battle of Tippecanoe."

Tecumseh's plans to weld an invincible fighting force from the divided Indian tribes was another casualty of Tippecanoe. The weary old Chieftain fought for the British during the War of 1812. He was killed in the Battle of Thames, in 1813, near Chatham, Ontario, Canada.

"The man who stamps the earth goes now to dwell with the gods of the under world," concluded an orator at Tecumseh's funeral.

Tecumseh's curse and the earthquake that followed remain, in the minds of many, proof of the most remarkable hex in history.

THE HEX THAT KILLED AN ENGLISH LORD

The circumstances surrounding the eerie death of Ferdinand, the Fifth Earl of Derby, has intrigued occult scholars since his death in A.D. 1494. There is an impressive sum of evidence to indicate the English nobleman was the victim of a death hex.

The events started one morning when the Earl waited in his gloomy study for a visitor. The visitor arrived shortly before noon, rushing into the room with the air of a man who would challenge a hurricane.

"I am Charles Hesket," the caller announced, brushing dirt and grime from his expensive clothes. "I won't be deceitful. I am the secret emissary in England for the Jesuits. I also represent those English Catholics who have been forced to live abroad in exile."

The Earl frowned, darkly. "I owe allegiance to his majesty, King Henry the Seventh. I want no part of any revolutionary plots."

"We need someone to plead our cause at court," Hesket persisted.

"Absolutely not." The Earl turned away from his visitor and walked deliberately toward the door. "You had better leave."

Hesket lowered his voice to a conspiratorial whisper. "My friends would be willing to pay handsomely for a person who could influence the king."

The Earl's frown was replaced by a crafty grin. "How much?" he inquired.

"I will give you a saddle bag of gold coins."

The Earl walked quickly to his desk. "Let's get down to business," he said.

Within an hour, Charles Hesket had paid an enormous bribe to the nobleman and delivered precise instructions as to what was expected from the Englishman. "Do not fail us," cautioned Hesket. "I have ways of taking care of my enemies. I am a master of witchcraft."

Evening had fallen over the Earl's estate when the jovial nobleman walked his visitor to the door. "It has been a pleasant and profitable day," the Earl said. "I shall contact you in a few days with news of my efforts."

Charles Hesket rode off into the dusk and the Earl returned to his great house. Within minutes, a message from the Earl was carried to the King's court. The message contained information on Hesket, his group, and their activities. Hesket was arrested, brought to trial, and sentenced to be hanged.

Awaiting his execution, Charles Hesket paced his jail cell and burned with a desire for revenge. "If I die, then the Earl will follow me," he raged. "My friends, the witches, will see that he expires from a horrible, unknown disease. His death will be more horrible than mine."

The prisoner's threats were brought to the Earl's attention. He dismissed them with a gesture of contempt. "This is as ridiculous as his claim that I accepted a bag of gold as a bribe to support his cause," the nobleman informed his friends. "His imagination conjured up the gold. The witches and the curses are only in his mind."

Justice was swift in England under the old kings. English law left little hope for appeals or commutation of a death sentence. Accordingly, Charles Hesket was led from his prison cell one dawn and executed. He died cursing the Earl of Derby. "The malady will strike within four full moons," Hesket swore.

Almost immediately, a number of strangers visited the communities near the Earl's estate. They lingered in the marketplace and taverns visited by the Earl's servants. The nobleman overheard the stories whispered by his servants.

". . . This old woman offered a gold coin if I would bring her a few strands of the master's hair," a buxom young maid reported.

". . . I met them, too," whispered a cook from the manor house kitchen. "They wanted me to bring them a piece of m'lord's toe-nails. Offered good money. Said they'd pay double for a bit of his toe and fingernails."

"Who are they? What does it mean?" inquired a gardener.

"Tain't something to get mixed up with," snapped the cook. "It has to do with the master and that fellow who was hanged."

Exactly four months after Charles Hesket was hanged,

the Earl of Darby was seized with a mysterious malady. Physicians were summoned to his bedroom; they were bewildered by the unusual symptoms. Their whispered deliberations on the Earl's condition were interrupted by a shrill, piercing scream from the young maid. The doctors turned to view whatever doom was indicated by the quivering finger of the maid.

"A hex doll! The witches make them," screamed the young woman. Her fearful moans filled the sick room.

The stricken nobleman watched from his bed as his physicians rushed to where the young woman stood. He was horrified to see a doctor pick up a fat, waxen little doll off the rug. The image seemed almost obscene, with two white button-like eyes smirking and simpering out from the black wax.

The doctor pulled something from the belly of the doll. "That's strange," he said. "This thing has hair imbedded in it."

"It's the master's hair!" the maid shouted. "You'll find his nail clippings on it, too."

"Get out of here with that silly talk," snapped the physician. He grabbed the young woman by the arm, shoved her out of the bedroom, and slammed the door. He turned to his patient. "My Lord, I shall have this thing destroyed. Don't believe these old wives' tales."

The waxen image was burned in the manor house fireplace while the doctors attended their wan, pale patient. Within hours, the sick man's condition worsened. His body was afflicted with a high fever that alternated with teeth-rattling chills. His mind fluttered like a dark bird, flying from reality to insanity in a single instant. He pleaded with his doctors to save his life and then lapsed into feverish screams about witches, wax dolls, and hexes.

Shortly before he died, the Earl motioned a doctor to his bedside. The physician placed his ear close to his patient's lips. "I am bewitched," gasped the Earl. "And, now I die."

Did Lord Derby die from the power of some deadly hex? Or, is it possible that friends of Charles Hesket killed the Earl with psychological warfare? Perhaps we will never know the real truth of this incredible case. We can only pause and wonder at the real, or imagined, power of a spell, hex, or curse on a man with guilt in his soul.

CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF

In *Strange Monsters and Madmen* (Popular Library, 1969) I reported on finding several ancient formulas that allegedly transformed a normal individual into the bloodthirsty, legendary man-beast—the frightening werewolf. The ancients believed in the powers of darkness and, at the zenith of the full moon, they claimed the man-wolf ruled the dark forests.

The old manuscripts declared that an applicant for werewolfery must first inscribe a seven-foot circle into the earth during the light of the full moon. A smaller, three-foot circle, must then be scrawled inside the larger circle. The applicant must set two flaming black candles in the center of these circles.

Once these arrangements are completed, the candidate who wishes to bring down the curse of the man-beast upon himself, must chant:

"Spirits of the dead, with souls of lead, hear me!
"Spirits of the grave, you Devil's slaves, hear me!
"Spirits of the air, from the wolves' lair, hear me!
"Spirits of hell's fire, angry with ire, hear me!

"Wolves, vampires, ghosts, ghouls,
"Make me one of your evil tools.
"Send me yon, send me hither,
"In a shape to make men quiver!
"Shiver, shiver, shiver!
"Come, Werewolves, come!"

When the chant is completed, the candidate must crouch near the center of the circle and prepare for the terrible transformation. ". . . The change will begin when the flames of the black candles start to burn blue," report the ancient scribes.

As any fan of monster movies knows, the werewolf is a murderous beast who kills when the moon is full. Movie fans also know that the cursed man-beast is also always killed for his misdeeds.

CURSE OF THE KUNG-LU

"*Kung-lu! Kung-lu!* The wild one is here!"

The warning cry from an alarmed sentry electrified a sleeping village on the remote slopes of the Himalayan mountains of Asia. Moments later, trembling natives leaped from their beds and rubbed the sleep from their bleary eyes. Frightened women hugged their children and ran to a fortified stockade in the center of the village. Grim-faced men grabbed deadly, yard-long fighting swords and rushed through the darkened streets. When the *kung-lu* came to call, every man was ready to defend his home and family.

The native men assembled at the edge of the village. They peered nervously through the darkness for some sign of the intruder. A loud, thrashing noise ripped through the night and the men of the village suppressed a desire to run.

Suddenly, the mists parted as the moon came from behind a dark cloud. "Kung-lu!" A village elder pointed dramatically toward a gigantic, hairy monster that stood immobile beside a small grove of trees.

The men gripped their swords and whispered their fears. They knew the strength of these powerful, man-beasts. A village monk glared at his companions. "Quit whispering like silly women," he commanded. "The *kung-lu* has no desire to fight. He is hungry. Bring your fruits and melons and prepare a feast. The wild one will leave our village with a full stomach. Otherwise, we will be cursed with the hex of the *Kung-lu!*"

Fruits and vegetables were brought to the edge of the village. A courageous young man cautiously approached the *kung-lu* with the offering. The monster grabbed the baskets of fruit. Then, the beast retreated back into the forest.

The men returned to their huts and started turning their

prayer wheels. The *kung-lu,* a giant specimen of a half human, half ape that is also known as the abominable snowman, is considered a powerful omen of bad luck in Asia. A mere sighting of one of these creatures is enough to send a native scurrying to the nearest temple, hopeful of appeasing his gods.

Dr. Samuel Morton, an authority on these strange creatures and their Asian haunts, believes there are valid reasons for the curse of the *kung-lu.* "The *kung-lu* is an enormous creature, powerfully built. Sometimes, he may stand up to ten feet tall and weigh several hundred pounds. They inhabit the remote regions of Tibet. These big fellows have a nasty disposition and a mean temper. When they start prowling around a village, bad luck seems to follow. Children disappear. Women are kidnapped. Men are murdered. A reign of bad luck descends upon the village. This is possibly how the superstition started."

Bands of ferocious men-beasts invaded the village of Talab Malkoti, in the district of Chamoli, India, in the winter of 1965. For several years the villagers had forgotten a series of skrimishes with the "wild, hairy men" who prowled the western range of the Himalayan mountains. Known as the *vanamanushas,* bands of marauders preyed on crops, kidnapped women, invaded villages during howling night raids, and captured grain, salt, and foodstuffs. Newspapers in New Delhi regularly report on these alarming incidents. ". . . It is of little wonder that the people of this area believe in the curse of the wild men," reported a New Delhi newspaper columnist.

A reverse twist was thrown on the terrible "bad luck" beasts by the practitioners of occult medicine in China. Oriental medicine has always been a bizarre field. Apothecary shops are crammed with jars of dried bat wings, pulverized reindeer horn, and aromatic herbs. "The Asian medicine men also claim there is an enormous curative power in an essence known as *moomuyan,*" reported Dr. Samuel Morton.

"This concoction is a rare mixture of the powdered bones and essence of boiled *Kung-lu,*" Dr. Morton continued. "The ancient tribes believed that consuming a ferocious enemy, or an untamed wild animal, endowed a person with the dead creature's powers. *Moomuyan* is probably a throw-back to these old cannibalistic rites."

Scientists laugh derisively at any mention of the abominable snowmen. They claim such monsters are the product of an over-active imagination. The natives, and many explorers, are not so quick to dismiss the power of a *kung-lu* hex.

"When a native sights such a creature, bad luck almost always shrouds his village," concluded Dr. Samuel Morton. "My colleagues may claim that the 'missing link' is an impossibility. The natives are not deterred by such pronouncements by a desk-bound critic. The people of the Himalayas know snowmen are real. They know *kung-lu* brings bad luck and curses wherever he goes."

THE ASSASSINATION CURSE OF ABE LINCOLN'S SON

The unusual "assassination curse" of Robert Todd Lincoln is one of the most bizarre incidents in the annals of the occult.

As a young man, Robert Lincoln watched his father die from the bullets fired by assassin John Wilkes Booth. Abraham Lincoln's death was the first in a curious chain of circumstances for the president's son.

Sixteen years later, Robert Lincoln accompanied President James Garfield into a railroad station in Washington, D.C. A demented little man, Charles Guiteau, leaped from the shadows and assassinated the president.

Two decades later, in 1901, Robert Lincoln toured the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. A pistol suddenly appeared in the hands of anarchist Leon F. Czolgosg. The gun roared and Robert Lincoln stood aghast as he witnessed the death of a third president.

The death of McKinely caused Robert Lincoln to change his entire life. "I am a death omen for any president," he moaned. "Four presidents have been assassinated since our Republic was formed. I have been present at three of those deaths. I carry a curse with me."

Until his own death in 1926, Robert Lincoln refused to meet another president. He had frequent invitations to White House functions. Lincoln declined politely because he sincerely believed he was a "death omen for any president."

HEX ON THE TOMB OF THE GIANTS

"There was treasure everywhere and even the giant skeletons were covered with rare gems and golden artifacts." This is the way that J. C. Brown, a well-known western prospector, described his claim of discovering a subterranean burial vault of an ancient race of giants.

Brown had been hired by a syndicate of investers in London, England, to find another rich gold strike in California. His employers were convinced that a rich "mother lode" bonanza existed in California's Cascade mountains.

Brown claimed to have discovered an even richer treasure during the summer of 1904. He was in an isolated area of the mountains one afternoon when he stumbled onto a shaft that led down into the earth. "I was bewildered because the shaft appeared to be man-made, yet I was miles from the nearest town," Brown admitted. "I lit a lantern, and decided to investigate the shaft."

The mystified prospector followed the tunnel down into the earth for a considerable distance. "At length, I came to an enormous underground room," Brown said. "This cavern also appeared to have been man-made. The dimensions were too precise for a natural origin. The walls of the room were covered with sheets of tempered copper."

The prospector's lantern light illuminated a treasure trove of gold and silver artifacts. "These objects were everywhere," he explained. "Stacks of thin, golden tablets rested in a corner of the room. These tablets had strange writing on each side. I think they were records of something."

Brown continued to explore the subterranean treasure vault. "Several tunnels led off from the main room," he explained. "Several of the smaller rooms were like burial vaults. Giant skeletons lay covered with the dust of the ages. I was overwhelmed by their size. These had to be the

giants which were mentioned in Genesis in the Bible. I was in the ancient tomb of a race of giants."

An average person might have rushed from the tomb, ran breathlessly into town, and filed a claim on the treasure cave. Surprisingly, Brown maintained a tight-lipped silence about his astonishing claim of discovery. "I was an employee of the London mining syndicate," he explained, later. "There were many legal complications. I knew that my backers were the type of men who would have demanded that these priceless artifacts be sold to the highest bidder. Or, they might have melted them down for their value in gold."

J. C. Brown reported that he returned to the giant's burial vault on several occasions during the next three decades. Then, in June, 1934, he related his astonishing story to a group of skeptical people in Stockton, California. "I'm getting to be an old man," he declared. "I would like to see this cavern opened before I die."

Rumors of the giant's subterranean treasure tomb raced through Stockton and, on the morning of June 19, 1934, an expedition composed of eighty people gathered for a trip to the caverns. There was acute disappointment among the group. During the night, prospector J. C. Brown vanished forever!

Detectives on the Stockton police department investigated the prospector's disappearance. "I assumed this was just another variation on some type of confidence game," a detective reported. "However, Brown didn't collect a cent from anyone. He just disappeared."

The uncanny deaths connected with the opening of King Tut's tomb were still being sensationalized by magazines and newspapers. Many people felt that J. C. Brown had violated a similar curse. "It may have been safe for Brown to visit the tomb, as long as he remained silent on the location," explained George Ross, who claimed he was the victim of a hex on the treasure vault. "When Brown decided to reveal the location, the curse took effect."

Unbelievable? The imaginative fantasies of a man who wants to believe in a mythical treasure cave? George Ross can only recite his personal experiences as proof of a curse on the treasure.

"I spent a lot of time with Brown. He hinted at the location of the place," Ross stated. "I know the general

area of the cave entrance. I went in alone on my first trip. I was going along fine when my horse bolted and threw me to the ground. I limped out on a broken leg. The second trip ended when my new partner was bitten by a snake. On the third expedition, we camped for the night and went to bathe in a creek. While we were washing up, our supplies vanished. I made fifteen trips into those mountains. Something always happened to stop me from getting into the area where the cave was supposed to be located. I decided the hex was a reality. I gave up."

A Stockton physician was another of J. C. Brown's closest companions before the old man vanished.

"He was a friendly person and I don't believe he perpetrated a hoax," the doctor said. "Brown's tale was based on truth. It was more than a fantasy created by an old man who needed companionship. Perhaps, there may have been a curse on the giant's burial vault. No one can explain the uncanny deaths of the people who unsealed King Tut's tomb. Brown disappeared, but I believe he was telling the truth.

"What do you believe?" the doctor inquired.

THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB

The first unusual event connected with the tomb of Tutankhamen at Egypt's "Valley of the Kings" occurred in 1916. Archaeologist Howard Carter relaxed after a noon meal when the silence of his quarters was disturbed by a shrill, thin wail. Carter, a partner in an expedition to discover the lost burial vault of the ancient pharoahs, was startled as a wrinkled old Arab in a burnoose robe burst into his room.

The gaunt, walnut-skinned old man gestured excitedly. "*Effendi!* I have come as fast as I could," wailed the Arab, breathlessly. "The grave robbers are looting again. Two gangs of those cursed corpse robbers have battled for the privilege of looting the ancient graves. The victors are now digging their way into the tombs!"

Howard Carter wrote later of the events of that day: "It was already late afternoon, so I hastily collected the few of my workmen who had escaped the Army Labour Levies, and with the necessary tools set out for the scene of the action, an expedition involving a climb of more than 1,800 feet over the Kurna hills by moonlight. It was midnight when we arrived at the scene, and the guide pointed out to me the end of a rope which dangled sheer down the face of a cliff . . .

". . . Listening, we could hear the robbers actually at work, so I first severed their rope, thereby cutting off their means of escape, and then, making a secure stout rope of my own, I lowered myself down the cliff. Shinnying down a rope at midnight, into a nestful of industrious tomb-robbers, is a pastime which at least does not lack excitement. There were eight at work, and when I reached the bottom there was an awkward moment or two. I gave them the alternative of clearing out by means of my rope, or else staying where they were without a rope at all

. . . eventually they saw reason and departed," Carter concluded. "The rest of the night I spent on the spot."

The fleeing tomb-robbers lived in a village once ruled by Abd-el-Rasul, a legendary Egyptian treasure thief and grave robber. The luckless thieves were apprehended by the Egyptian authorities and, as justice was often swift, were executed that same night. "They were the first of the victims of the curse on King Tut's tomb," wrote an English newspaperman.

The hexed site in the Valley of the Kings led directly to the tomb of King Tutankhamen. Workmen required several years to remove the rubble that blocked the doorway that led to the pharaoh's burial chamber. The door was carefully unsealed and the expedition's leaders followed Howard Carter through the shaft and into the tomb.

"Is there anything here?" Lord Carnarvon inquired.

Howard Carter held his torch light high. "There are all sorts of wonders," he replied, happily.

The light from his torch was reflected back from golden couches, a gilted and jeweled throne, enormous gold statues, and two shrines carved in gold that resembled golden snakes. There were also many curses carved on the walls of the burial chamber. "Death will come on swift pinions to those who disturb the rest of the Pharaohs," read one of the golden inscriptions. Variations of this curse were inscribed on parchment, carved on gold tablets, and affixed to the walls of each chamber. The vault was decorated with the sign of the Scarab, an ancient sacred symbol in Egypt.

The ink had barely dried on news stories concerning this important archaeological discovery before newspaper reporters and news-hungry editors poured out reams of copy on "the mummy's curse" and the "curse of the Pharaohs." Sensational tabloid newspapers thrilled their readers with gory details on the possible consequences of unsealing a Pharaoh's tomb.

News of the curse soared into orbit when Lord Carnavron died on April 6, 1923, after a lingering illness of three weeks. He had been bitten by an insect. ". . . More than twenty persons connected at some time or another with the unsealing of the famous tomb died under mysterious circumstances," wrote C. W. Ceram in *Gods, Graves, and Scholars*: *The Story of Archaeology*.

The deaths were eerie enough to make even the most conservative Egyptologist shudder when someone mentioned the curse on King Tut's tomb. The Englishman who was a secretary to Howard Carter had been in fine health and good spirits when he retired to his bed one night. He was found dead on the following morning. "We just can't determine the cause of his death," reported a coroner.

Lord Westbury, also connected with opening the tomb, was considered one of England's most prominent men until he leaped out of a window from his seventh-floor apartment. A. C. Mace, a partner with Howard Carter, had worked actively in excavating King Tut's tomb. He died shortly afterward.

Even the relatives of those connected with the excavation were not immune from the curse. Aubrey Herbert, who was a half-brother to Lord Carnarvon, committed suicide "during temporary insanity."

In February, 1929, another mysterious death stunned the world. Lady Elizabeth Carnarvon expired from a mysterious illness following an "insect bite." Drawings of the sacred Scarab beetle accompanied the news stories of her death.

Within a span of seven years, more than twenty persons who had opened King Tut's tomb were dead. There is no doubt that it was all very uncanny.

THE CURSE OF WEREWOLF CREEKS

Ask any of the residents of the Harz mountains of Germany about Wolves' Hollow and, chances are, you will be rewarded with a fascinating collection of folk tales. You may also receive a strong warning not to venture near this strange place, which is nestled in a remote region of the central German mountains. The Germans consider Wolves' Hollow to be a fearful place. The reason behind their fright is deeply imbedded in Germanic folklore and old traditions.

A wrinkled old mountaineer was the first to tell me about the stream. "It appears to be a place of innocence," he declared. "Don't be fooled! The stream that flows past there carries cursed water. Drink from that Devil's stream and you will be turned into a werewolf!"

"How do you know this will happen?" I inquired. "Perhaps it is nothing more than a superstition."

The old man snorted his amusement. "That's what the Count von Schmidt thought. Listen to what happened to him . . ."

It was less than a century ago when Count Herbert von Schmidt and his lovely bride were picnicking in the mountains. The couple stopped at Wolves' Hollow, and the countess drank deeply from the cursed stream. The water had a sour, sulphurous taste.

That night, on their return to their castle, the countess was afflicted with an unknown malady. She complained of a severe headache, accompanied by nausea. Her sleep was disturbed and, on two occasions, she awakened from a terrifying nightmare. "I will sleep in the east wing," she informed her husband. "I will return to our bedchamber when I am well."

At the same time, there was a series of seemingly unrelated murders in a village near the castle. A young boy had vanished from his bed. Several young, teen-aged girls

were attacked by a terrifying monster that snarled, ripped, and clawed at their bodies. The village was soon cloaked with terror and only the bravest men walked alone at night. By day, armed men hunted the forest and fields for some sign of a killer wolf.

As the folk tradition recounts, it was Count von Schmidt who cornered a wolf-like creature in an abandoned hut on his lands. It was dusk, but the German nobleman could see a dim form lurking in a corner of the hut. He drew his pistol and fired several shots into the screaming, twisting figure.

"The count discovered he had shot his bride," continued the old mountaineer. "My grandfather was only a few steps behind the count. He said that the countess had blood smeared on her mouth; she had killed a young child only a few minutes before she was shot."

The story told by the old mountaineer has been preserved by students of Germanic folklore. It is a well-known story in the annals of werewolfery. When Adolph Hitler rose to power in Germany, the demonical dictator established an elite youth corps. These young Nazis were teenaged terrorists known as the "little werewolves." Hitler, who had a strong belief in Teutonic tradition and folklore, held a special ceremony one morning for his wolf pack. Each of the young men was given a vial of water from Wolves' Hollow. "Guard it carefully," the Führer commanded. "Drink the substance just before you go into battle."

Cursed lakes and streams can be found in the folklore of many lands. Medicine men in the American Indian tribes claimed there were several springs of unquestioned power. "Drink from that water and you will be as courageous as the killer wolf," they informed their warriors. In Africa, the witch doctors frequently led young men to a secluded place within the Sahara desert. An oasis in that arid land was capable of turning a cowardly man into a rampaging warrior, or so the witch doctors claimed.

Peasants in the Balkan mountains claim there are several "evil streams" that turn the unsuspecting drinker into a man-beast. Hungarian folklore says that Vlad IV—the human beast who was later known as *Dracula*—slaked his thirst at a mountain brook near the town of Wallachia.

The evil water created a murderous metamorphosis in the Hungarian ruler.

By A.D. 1445, Vlad IV was known as *Dracula*—the fearful devil. He washed his hands in the blood of his victims before sitting down to a meal. He designed giant torture machines that chopped up prisoners like cabbage. Thousands of his subjects were impaled outside his castle as this human monster laughed with delight. The *Encyclopedia Britanica* reported: ". . . The story of his savage ferocity exceeds belief. He is said to have feasted among . . . his victims."

There are many areas of the world where the water is considered to have healing properties. Is it possible that other areas have water with a chemical substance to transform people into virtual killer monsters? Could some unknown combination of natural chemicals, or minerals, create a chaotic condition in the human brain?

DEATH HEX OF THE RED AUTOMOBILE

As we know, fate frequently moves along dark, mean streets. There are many occultists who have a profound belief that a curse on an inanimate object can bring bad luck, and even death, to the user. While this may sound like an impossibility, the occultists point to a remarkable red touring car that figured in the deaths of twenty million people.

The early months of 1914 were an explosive era in European history. The Balkan states were overwhelmed by terror and political turmoil. Cruel assassins lurked in every doorway and waited for a prominent victim. In Germany, the crusty old Kaiser longed for past Teutonic glories and plotted with his staff of Prussian generals. In France and England, farmers were conscripted from their fields and marched into army training camps. All that was needed was a fateful incident to plunge Europe into another senseless war.

That spark came on the afternoon of June 28, 1914, when a red touring car moved sluggishly through the crowded streets of Sarajevo, the capital city of Bosnia. Perched on top of the limousine's leather seats, waving to his subjects, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the beautiful Duchess of Hohenburg, seemed oblivious to any danger. "We must show the people that we are not afraid," the Archduke told his wife. "It is a time for courage."

Flags, placards, and roaring applause had greeted the courageous royal couple. The citizens were still cheering when the Archduke's chauffeur spun the steering wheel, roared away from the guarded parade route, and into a cobblestoned, dead end street. The royal limousine had barely entered the narrow street when a trembling young man leaped from a shadowy doorway. Death glinted in his eyes.

Flames spurted from the pistol in his hands. The young man shot bullet after bullet into the royal couple's bodies. Within minutes, telegraph wires flashed news of the assassination to the war rooms of Europe. This was the excuse the generals needed. "We will march at dawn," snapped a bearded Prussian general. "I have been praying for this."

Within weeks, the world was embroiled in World War I. By Armistice, more than twenty million people had lost their lives.

Only a few days after the war started, General L. Potiorek and his swift Austrian Fifth Corps smashed their way into Sarajevo. The army paused to divide the spoils of their victory and General Potiorek seized the death car. "This is a magnificent machine," the general announced, grandly. "It shall be my personal car until the Armistice."

Battle strategy, victory, and the war ended abruptly for the unfortunate general. Less than three weeks after he captured the red automobile, his troops suffered a painful defeat at Valievo. The bewildered general was ordered back to Vienna, stripped of his command, and cashiered from the army. Disgraced, penniless, and convinced that he was the victim of a terrible curse attached to the red car, General Potiorek became a flabby, sour-faced street beggar in Vienna. His bitter eyes glistened with an insane gleam. He mumbled crazily about ". . . that terrible car . . . that death car . . ." His torment ended when he died in the charity ward of a hospital

The legend concerning the cursed car gained momentum when a Captain on General Potiorek's staff was promoted after the general's dismissal. The captain was driving the red car a week later when the vehicle swerved, killed two farmers, and smashed into a tree. The luckless captain died in the accident.

The battered car was placed in storage until after the Armistice. Subsequently it was restored by the new Governor of Yugoslavia. He narrowly escaped death in three accidents. He lost his arm in the fourth collision. He had owned the car for less than two months. A Dr. Ludwig Srkis purchased the car; he died a few months later when the car rolled over an embankment and crushed him to death.

The automobile continued to kill its owners with alarming regularity. An Austrian jeweler purchased the

car, had it restored, and then committed suicide. A French racing team dismissed the whispered rumors about the curse on the car, bought the vehicle, and tuned the engine for their first race. The race had hardly begun when the red automobile twisted out of control and threw the driver to his death. A farmer became the next owner; he died in an accident a few weeks later.

The shattered hulk of a once luxurious car was then towed to a garage in Savajevo that was operated by Tiber Hirschfield, a well-known mechanic. The garage owner's friends whispered that the car was cursed. "That is ridiculous," replied Hirschfield. "I know something about machinery. There's been some bad luck connected with the car. But, no one can tell me that the motor company built a hex in this old beast."

Hirschfield drove the car proudly through the streets of Sarajevo. Peasants watched his trips with a knowing eye. "A curse does not go away," predicted an old woman. "He will be a victim of the car—just like all the others."

The final accident occurred when Tiber Hirschfield and four companions were driving to a wedding in a nearby community. Hirschfield was known as a careful driver and, yet, witnesses said the automobile swerved directly into the path of an oncoming car. The mechanic and his four passengers were killed.

After that, no one would drive the grisly vehicle. It was abandoned in a field near Sarajevo until a government official learned that the Archduke's automobile was now a battered, rusting wreck. The car was restored at government expense and given to a museum in Vienna, Austria. A plaque explained the car had killed 16 of its drivers and played a role in starting World War I. The death hex on the deadly automobile ended during a bombing raid during the Second World War. A "blockbuster" bomb scored a direct hit on the automobile and blew it into oblivion.

HITLER'S HOODOOED BATTLESHIP

Death and destruction, death and destruction—this was the anthem sung by Hitler's admirals as they planned the *Scharnhorst*, a 40,000-ton battle cruiser. The sleek steel monster was to be a floating fortress for the German navy in World War II.

"The *Scharnhorst* will be the fastest ship of her size in the world," boasted a naval designer. "She will have a long range, powerful guns, and the finest equipment."

And, as the hapless crewmen on the jinxed ship later discovered, the sleek craft also came with a horrible, built-in supply of hoodoo and bad luck. The *Scharnhorst* was nearing completion when timbers in the shipyard broke under her weight. The massive steel hull crashed to the ground. As the craft rolled over on her side, sixty shipyard workers were crushed to death. One hundred and ten workers were injured.

"That monster is hexed," swore the superstitious shipyard workers.

Eventually, the *Scharnhorst* was ready to be launched during an impressive Nazi ceremony. The highest officials of Nazidom, including Hitler, gathered at the shipyard for the festivities. They were embarrassed to find the *Scharnhorst* waited for no men, including the Führer. She had broken away during the night and launched herself!

The ship's first assignment was to pump death and destruction into Danzig, the "free city" in the Polish corridor. During the battle, twelve gunners on the *Scharnhorst* were suffocated when an air fan system stopped working on an overheated gun turret. Nine more sailors were killed when one of the ship's big guns misfired and exploded. Later, at the siege of Olso, the *Scharnhorst* was hit in a dozen places, burst into flames, and had to be towed out of danger by another ship.

Battered, bombed, and beaten, the *Scharnhorst* limped

toward the German fatherland. She slipped into the Elbe river—and collided with the mighty ocean liner, the *Bremen*. The liner sank into the mud while the hoodoo ship weaved toward the shipyard for repairs.

The *Scharnhorst* was hastily repaired. By then, Hitler's legions were being pushed back by Allied armies and the Nazis needed any ship—including one with a built-in jinx. The *Scharnhorst* sailed north along the coast of Norway and, during the darkness, blundered into the middle of an English attack convoy. Trying to escape, the jinxed battle wagon rammed a small British cargo ship.

"Reverse engines!" screamed the German captain. The *Scharnhorst* shuddered, and then broke free from the smaller ship.

"Full speed ahead!" screamed the German captain. "We can outrun these British bathtubs."

More than 16,000 yards away, the commander of a British warship watched with frustration as the sleek German ship steamed away. "Fire every gun we've got," he ordered. The roar of the guns shattered the darkness of the North sea. Tons of explosives roared toward the *Scharnhorst*.

The broadside would have missed the jinxed German ship—except, the luckless *Scharnhorst* swung wide and steamed directly into the path of the shells. The ship shuddered under devastation of several direct hits. The British ships moved in for the kill and, after more hits, the *Scharnhorst* sank beneath the waves.

The entire crew went to a watery death, final victims of the hex of the *Scharnhorst*.

It was as if the ancient Teutonic Gods had cursed the pride of the Nazi navy.

THE CURSE ON THE WIZARD'S WOOD CHIP

Claiming that he possessed the devil's own formula for sorcery, a mysterious Dr. Lamb practiced black magic in London during the reign of King Charles the First, from 1625 to 1649. A tall, bony man with an angular face, and fiery red hair, Dr. Lamb was soon the subject of a swirling controversy. Gossiping servant girls whispered that he performed obscene midnight rites that called up demons from their sulphurous world. Many people swore he could raise the dead, predict the future, or strike his enemies dead with a powerful hex.

His critics doubted that Dr. Lamb was anything more than a clever fraud, a charlatan who preyed on the ignorance of others. One afternoon, Dr. Lamb had completed a noon meal of roast beef in a popular English tavern. He reached for his ale glass when he heard an angry voice growl: "Dr. Lamb is nothing but an imposter!"

Dr. Lamb turned to stare at a scowling businessman, James Whitmore. "I am no fraud," the wizard said, quietly.

James Whitmore shook his clenched fist at the sorcerer. "You tell lies to women. You cheat them out of their pitiful wages."

Dr. Lamb looked directly into his accuser's gleaming eyes. "Would you like a free demonstration of my powers?"

James Whitmore hesitated. "I didn't expect such an offer," he mumbled.

Dr. Lamb rose from the table, adjusted his clothing, and drained his ale glass. "I hope your heart can take it," he said. "There are things to kill a man with fright."

"No talk. A little action," snapped Whitmore.

"As you choose." The controversial wizard paid his bill and led the businessman from the tavern and toward his studio.

"*The Certainty of the Spirit World*" was published in 1791. Written by Richard Baxter, this rare volume records the seemingly miraculous events that occurred in Dr. Lamb's apartment that afternoon. James Whitmore requested the presence of two additional witnesses. The sorcerer agreed and led his three doubting visitors into an empty room.

"There is a single request that I must make," Dr. Lamb said.

Whitmore interrupted. "I suppose your powers don't work today."

"Allow me to finish, my angry accuser," Lamb continued. "You will allow me to perform a wonder, or perhaps two. However, I must warn you to not take any object from this room. The devil's power will be manifested before your eyes. If you take anything as evidence, the aura of evil will accompany it."

Dr. Lamb strode out of the room, and moments later, a tree sprang up out of the floor. James Whitmore and his companions stared in bewilderment as the tree grew to ceiling height within two minutes.

"There has to be trickery," Whitmore mumbled.

The three businessmen searched for signs of trickery when a crackling noise in a corner of the room drew their attention. A fog-like mist lingered along the wallboards. Three tiny men dashed out of the vapor. The diminutive men were dressed in strange costumes and armed with small axes. Shouting to each other in an unknown language, the three creatures ringed the tree and began to chop it down.

The tree crashed to the floor just as Dr. Lamb entered the room. He clapped his bony hands and uttered a strange incantation. The three little men rushed back into the mist as the entire scene vanished. The only evidence of the phenomena was a pile of wood chips on the floor.

"I hope you are satisfied," smirked Dr. Lamb. "Those tiny demons are a comfort to me. I raise them from the other world to provide me with firewood during the winter."

The three stunned businessmen babbled a barrage of questions at the wizard. "Believe what you wish," announced Dr. Lamb. "My powers are available for a fee. If you wish to hex a competitor in business, or need a pow-

erful curse placed on someone, you can make an appointment." He led his befuddled visitors toward the door.

As the three astonished businessmen walked away from Dr. Lamb's studio, Richard Whitmore reached into his coat pocket and closed his fingers over a wood chip. While the three tiny figures had chopped at the tree, a woodchip had landed near Whitmore's chair. He had pocketed the object, hoping to have the chip analyzed for evidence by a friend at a university.

"What do you think?" inquired one of Whitmore's companions.

Whitmore held up the wood chip. "We shall have this checked," he said. "There is talk of men who can look into a person's eyes and magnetize them into believing anything." As we know, Whitmore was talking of hypnosis, then an infant science.

"What about the curse on any object we took away?"

"I am not a simpering servant girl," answered James Whitmore.

Richard Baxter wrote that the sorcerer's accuser changed his opinion that same night. Whitmore had retired for the evening when a gusting, high wind roared against his home. The storm gained in velocity until the businessman's home rocked on its foundation. Whitmore and his family fled in terror and, watching from a neighbor's home, noticed that the wind storm was directed only at their home.

"It's the hand of the devil on you," croaked an old man. "You got something that ole Beelzebub wants."

Whitmore remembered the wood chip he had secretly taken from Dr. Lamb's apartment. He raced back into his shaking house, grabbed the slender piece of evidence, and ran to Dr. Lamb's office. The sorcerer heard the loud pounding on his door. He opened it to look into the pale, stark face of James Whitmore.

"Here's your wood chip," yelled the terrorized businessman. "I apologize. Please! Stop the wind from tearing my home to pieces."

The sorcerer's lips spread over his skull-like face. "The wind is gone," he said. "The chip is back. The devil is happy."

James Whitmore returned to his home. Everything was serene and calm.

This incident, and others like it, convinced a sizable portion of the population of London that Dr. Lamb was indeed a representative of the devil and a black magician. The object of burning hatred.

Author William Godwin told of the wizard's shocking death. He wrote: ". . . Dr. Lamb at length became so odious by his reputation for these infernal practices that the populace rose upon him in 1640, and tore him to pieces in the streets. Nor did the effects of his illfame terminate here. Thirteen years after, a woman, who had been his servant-maid, was apprehended on a charge of witchcraft, was tried, and in expiation of her crime was executed at Tyburn."

SUICIDE HEX CAST BY THE FRENCH WITCH

". . . Stop her! She's going to jump!"

". . . Don't move, little girl, we'll save you!"

". . . *Mon Dieu!* May the angels take her soul!"

These anguished cries interrupted the quiet Ille-Saint-Louis district of Old Paris on the evening of August 18, 1948. Near dusk, several people from the neighborhood had clustered on the sidewalk in front of their homes for a few minutes of congenial conversation. Their discussion was suddenly interrupted when a slender, tearful young boy came rushing into their midst.

"Why the sad face, Pierre?" chided a jovial mechanic. "Have the girls been teasing you again?"

The boy's reply stunned the group.

"It's Marie," he sobbed, sharply. "The voices have told her to jump out of a high window."

The mechanic grabbed the boy. "Where is Marie?" he asked with a high, taut voice.

"Up there." The crying boy lifted his face upward and gazed across the street to an apartment building. The men stared in disbelief as twelve-year-old Marie Brisson crawled out onto the window ledge on the fifth floor. The young girl was totally oblivious to the screams from her neighbors. As if commanded by some inner demon, she leaped out into space and fell crashing onto the sidewalk.

The stunned onlookers rushed to the limp body on the sidewalk. "She's alive," whispered a stout, red-faced woman. "Call an ambulance. Perhaps she can be saved."

Marie Brisson was rushed to the Lariboisiere Hospital and given emergency treatment. She had fractured her legs and broken several bones in the suicide leap.

A policeman asked the girl's mother about the reasons for Marie's desire for death.

Marcelle Brisson, a widow, wrung her thin hands in despair. "She has always been a good little girl," she wept. "A few days ago, her conduct became almost intolerable. She claimed that voices in her head were driving her mad. She became evasive and refused to tell me what troubled her."

The police inquiry revealed that little Marie had been secretly visiting the apartment of an elderly spinster, Mademoiselle Simone Frentel. A tall, thin woman who glared out on the world from anxious, strained eyes, the spinster lived in a gloomy apartment in an ancient, soot-covered building. Her only companions were a pack of black cats. She seldom ventured into the streets except in the late hours of night. Mademoiselle was too busy with her studies. She hoped to plumb the secrets of the occult and receive demonic powers to cast revenge upon her real, or imaginary, enemies.

"She's a harmless old crazy woman," the spinster's neighbors informed the police. "She claims she has the power to have demons take possession of a human body. *Mon dieu!* Such nonsense!"

The police discovered that Mademoiselle Frentel had hypnotized little Marie on many occasions. The child was kept in lengthy mesmeric trances while the elderly woman chanted incantations over the young girl. "I did not mean to bring harm to the little girl," protested the woman who wanted to be a witch. "I had to experiment. Don't you see? My experiments needed a human subject."

After several days in the hospital, Marie Brisson passed the critical stage. "She will live, but she will be crippled for life," declared her doctor. "I hope the police prosecute that old woman."

Marie's mother shook her head, sadly. "I am afraid not. She has not violated the law. There is nothing in the criminal code against the practice of witchcraft."

Later, the police forced a sanity hearing for the occult-obsessed spinster. She was committed to a mental hospital and remained there as a patient until her death in 1959. Her death-bed confession to a priest indicated a knowledge of the powers she had forced on young Marie Brisson. "I just wanted to see if the demons and their voices could make a girl do something terrible," she moaned, feebly.

The tragic case illustrates the dangers in tampering with the unknown forces of the occult. The human mind and brain are a delicate mechanism. Experiments into hypnotism, trances, and similar manifestations of the paranormal may unleash some dark power from the prison of the mind. Such experiments should be conducted only under careful supervision.

THE CURSE OF THE MONGOL'S TOMB

Tamerlane, the Mongol ruler who claimed to be a descendant of Genghis Khan, was a cruel conqueror whose howling hordes of barbarians swept across Russia, India, Persia, and the nations along the Asia Minor. Few armies could stand against the ferocious battle tactics of Tamerlane's screaming legions of dare-devil calvarymen. As a result, the world sighed thankfully in A.D. 1405 when the old warrior died and was interred in a special tomb in Samarkand, Russia. A beautiful mosque stands today to mark the site of the mongol's tomb.

In 1912, a delegation of nervous professors from the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg, Russia, approached Tsar Nicholas II at his palace. "We would request the permission of Your Royal Highness to open the tomb of Tamerlane," said Professor N. D. Zverev. "The burial vault should contain many valuable artifacts from the early Mongolian culture."

Suspicion sprang into the Tsar's mind like a row of extra eyes. "Do you think I am a fool?" exploded His Imperial Highness. "I'll call my guards and—"

"What have we done to offend Your Majesty?" inquired the professor.

"I am no simple-minded Tadjunk," snapped the Tsar. "I know the legends of the peasants of Samarkand. They say a curse will plague anyone who violates the eternal sleep of Tamerlane."

Professor Zverev forced a slight smile. "Surely, your Majesty does not—"

"I am a man who believes in mysticism," replied Nicholas II. "Rasputin has revealed many occult mysteries to the Royal family. Now, professor, recite the inscription carved in the stone over Tamerlane's grave."

"It says death shall rain down on anyone who opens the grave. War will follow."

The Tsar waved his hands in a gesture of dismissal. "I do not tempt fate," he announced.

Following the Communist Revolution and the assassination of the Tsar, the Academy again sought official permission to excavate Tamerlane's tomb. A bearded government bureaucrat shrugged his shoulders helplessly at the delegation of scientists. "The peasants are fighting against the glorious revolution," he said. "I can do nothing."

In 1941, the Academy received permission to open Tamerlane's tomb. Newsmen from the official government news agency, Tass, and reporters from the *Leningrad Pravda* accompanied the expedition to record their progress. *Pravda* described how the scientists had entered the Gur Emir mausoleum and moved back the enormous slab of green nephrite that protected Tamerlane's final resting place.

"Popular legend persists to this day that under this stone lies the source of a terrible war," wrote a *Pravda* reporter in the June 19, 1941 edition of that newspaper. On June 21, it was announced that Tamerlane's coffin had been opened. The old warrior's skeleton was being examined.

That same night of June 21-22, the warplanes of the German Luftwaffe roared across the Russian border. They dropped tons of explosive bombs on Russian cities. The German-Russian hostilities in World War II had started. The curse of Tamerlane's Tomb had proven true.

HEX OF THE MUMMY'S BONE

On March 29, 1937, a Scottish nobleman named Sir Alexander Seton called a press conference to announce that he was returning a sliver of bone to Egypt. "This bone is supposed to be from the skeleton of some ancient Pharaoh," Seton explained. "My wife found it in Egypt. This curio has created some uncanny occurrences at our home."

Sir Alexander explained that a ghostly hooded entity had been seen in the Seton home. "Guests in our home complained. We lost our servant help," explained the nobleman. "Our maids see the spectre each day."

Other unusual incidents disturbed Sir Alexander and Lady Seton. "We had two fires break out without any cause," he told the newsmen. "In the night, glassware was tossed from a cabinet and broken."

"Could this be your imagination?" asked a skeptical newsman.

"I should say not!" snapped the Scotchman. "A surgeon borrowed the bone to test it. That evening, his maid broke her leg running from a robed, hooded ghost. The doctor returned the bone to my house. The catastrophes started again."

Lady Seton picked up the bone as a souvenir of her visit to a tomb near Gizeh, Egypt, in 1936. "I am a level-headed Scotsman," declared Sir Alexander. "I don't believe in mediums calling up the dead and rubbish of that sort. Yet, the repetition of the strange phenomena in my home indicates there is some hex, or curse, connected with the bone."

"We are returning to Egypt and replacing the bone in the tomb where my wife picked it up," he continued. "We are making the trip to Egypt ourselves to be certain the bone is replaced in the correct tomb. This whole ghastly business of bad luck must stop."

A cynical newspaperman eyed the nobleman with amusement. "Will you sell the relic to me?" he inquired.

The Setons shook their heads. "Absolutely not!" replied Sir Alexander. "We have been cursed with bad luck because of this wretched bone. We don't want anyone to endure these same horrible, paranormal events."

After their press conference, the Setons sailed for Egypt. They replaced the sliver of bone in the tomb at Gizeh. The disturbing force of the pharaoh's hex vanished. The Setons returned to a normal home life in Scotland. The robed, hooded figure vanished from their mansion. The mysterious phenomena became an unexplained memory.

"I don't pretend to understand all of this," Sir Alexander admitted. "I know it happened. There must be unusual forces and powers which we do not understand. I am very thankful that the whole ghastly business is over."

AUSTRALIA'S MYSTERIOUS KADAITCHA HEX

I was in Central Australia a few years ago, collecting material on the strange and unusual, when I heard of the alleged powers of the *Kadaitcha*. This is supposed to be a mysterious force which can supposedly be directed against the enemies of the Central Australian aborigines. The *Kadaitcha* is considered to be the death hex for any person who offends these natives. Tribal elders jealously guard their secret of calling *Kadaitcha* from "the world of the invisibles."

"*Kadaitcha* is believed to be the mighty spirit from the other world," explained Ray Johnson, who acted as my guide in the 'out country.' "Don't dismiss it as some silly native superstition. Many of the white settlers in these isolated areas believe firmly in *Kadaitcha*. They claim to have seen some very powerful manifestations of this angry spirit."

"Does this have anything to do with the natives who sing an enemy to death?" I asked. The 'death song' of the aborigines is a constant irritant to law enforcement officers in the back country. Strange, primitive tribal chants are directed toward an offending native. The ritual invariably leads to the victim's death. Psychiatrists talk of the mental effects of psychological warfare while occultists view the 'death song' as another manifestation of powers which are not yet understood.

"*Kadaitcha* is the deadliest spirit called up by the natives," explained my guide. "They claim this spirit can break a man's neck, twisting it viciously. Then, the victim's neck is straightened again so the poor soul can run home before he dies."

There are records of a coroner's inquest in Darwin, Australia that attest to these baffling elements of *Kadaitcha*. A native named Selly was found dead in his hut at

the Areyonga settlement, about 100 miles west of Alice Springs. There were no signs of a fight or a disturbance in the dead man's hut.

A doctor testified that the native's neck had been savagely twisted. "However, there are no signs that he fell and broke his neck," he reported. "There were no marks on the body."

A policeman testified that a set of "large, deep footprints" led to the hut. As the aborigines are considered the best trackers in the world, the inquest requested that the village elders identify the tracks.

"Those are Selly's tracks," they concluded

"B-b-but who killed the man?" protested the coroner.

"It was *Kadaitcha*," the natives said.

The coroner directed that an open verdict be delivered on the proceedings.

"I guess the white man's law figured that it might be difficult to charge an invisible spirit with murder," said Ray Johnson, my guide.

DEATH HEX OF THE MUMMY'S HAND

In 1948, a wealthy student of the occult died under mysterious circumstances. John James Northwell was fascinated with the paranormal and his private collection of rare books on the subject exceeded more than three thousand volumes. Mrs. Margaret Northwell claimed her husband's death was the direct result of a death curse from a mummy's hand.

Mrs. Northwell outlined her convictions in a letter to a London newspaper. She wrote:

". . . we lived very happily until 1947. We had the funds to pursue our interests in the unusual. That summer, we visited Egypt to investigate the occult aspects of the great pyramids. While there, we were approached by a Bedouin who offered to sell us the mummified hand of an Egyptian princess. This Arab must have been a grave-robber, yet he seemed to know the history of the hand. He claimed it came from the mummy of an Egyptian princess who lived during the reign of Menes, the first Pharoah.

"We purchased the grisly curio and, almost immediately, my husband was afflicted with insomnia. He required hours to fall to sleep. If he dozed, he awakened from a frightening nightmare of strangulation by a disembodied hand. He suffered for several months, then died during his sleep. The doctors said he had suffocated beneath his pillows during the night. I believe he was the victim of the curse of the mummy's hand.

"I decided to destroy the terrible hand. I built a roaring fire in our library. It took three hours for the flames to consume the ghastly thing. As I watched the hand burn, I remembered the ancient Egyptian tradition that the body must not be dismembered. I wear an amulet now to ward off any possible hex that may have been left over from the hand."

Shortly after writing her letter, Margaret Northwell died during her sleep.

The coroner's verdict was "suffocation during her sleep."

GHOSTLY CURSE FROM A DEAD HUSBAND

The astonishing story of a dead husband who returned from the grave to hex his grieving young widow started on a slippery, snow-packed highway on the night of December 13, 1969. Arthur Milton, 29, was driving toward his home in Los Angeles. The young salesman was weary and bleary-eyed after a three week business trip in the midwest. Sometimes during the night, Arthur Milton lost control of his expensive automobile. The vehicle overturned and he was crushed to death in the wreckage.

"He was always driving too fast," admitted his widow, Mary Ann Milton. "I used to plead with him to slow down. He wore a talisman since he was a little boy, an ugly thing on a thin gold necklace. He said the talisman was a gift from a witch who lived near home. The device was supposed to protect him from any danger."

The undertaker brought the talisman to the widow. "I want it buried with Arthur," she said.

The earth had barely been shoveled onto the young salesman's grave before Mary Ann Milton was overwhelmed by a feeling of utter despair. "This was more than grief over the loss of a loved one," explained the widow's father, Tom Daniels. "She had stood up well until the burial. Then, she lost her appetite, didn't sleep, and started wasting away."

The widow's father consulted a physician. "We decided to remove Arthur's belongings from their apartment. I discovered an enormous collection of books on demonology. There was one old book on hexes," continued Tom Daniels. "We had talked about these subjects, but I didn't know he was so serious about witchcraft."

Daniels also rummaged through his deceased son-in-law's files. "There were chants and hex signs there," he said. "I became convinced that a dead man had hexed my daughter."

Fatigued, eyes reddened from lack of sleep, barely con-

scious of her surroundings, the young widow sat spellbound and stared at a portrait of her husband. "Mary Ann was bewitched by that photograph," said her father. "I decided the picture held a curse. I burned it."

That night, the quiet atmosphere of the Daniels home was disturbed by the manifestation of an unusual visitor. "A ghost appeared in the doorway of the kitchen," Daniels declared. "It was uncanny, like a scene from an old horror movie. I had insisted that my daughter remain with us for a few days. Now, her dead husband's ghost was haunting my home."

"We could feel it in the room with us," claimed Mary Ann Milton, the widow. "I heard a voice calling me. It whispered that I should join my husband on the other side. The voice said that a paradise lay beyond death and my husband was waiting for me."

When the widow informed her father of the disembodied voice, Tom Daniels sought counsel from a young priest. They decided the disturbances resulted from Arthur Milton buried with the witch's talisman around his neck.

The authorities were approached, and permission was obtained to exhume the body. Tom Daniels stood in the bleak, wind-worn cemetery on a cold February afternoon as the coffin was pulled from the grave. He said: "I took the talisman off the body myself, poured kerosene over the ugly thing, and burned it."

The corpse was sprinkled with salt and wrapped in a white sheet. The grave was closed. "The priest found that sprinkling the body with salt was supposed to ward off evil spirits," Daniels said.

His strange duties completed, Tom Daniels returned to his home in suburban Los Angeles country. The ghastly disturbances ended; the young widow reported the disembodied "voices" had vanished.

Mary Ann quickly regained her robust health. She obtained a job to keep her mind off the events that had occurred. Recently, she announced her engagement to a young aircraft engineer.

"I know hexes and curses are supposed to be nothing but old wives' tales," said Tom Daniels, recently. "I saw the spectre. This was more than a widow's grief. It was a dead man's spirit returning to hex his widow."

CURIOUS CURSE OF THE AVENGING ODOR

The unsual odor in the hotel room created an irate group of guests in a delapidated waterfront hotel in Marseilles, France. The day clerk had just hung up his coat and started toward his desk on the morning of October 17, 1931. He looked up to see a group of burly, angry guests striding toward his desk.

"There ain't a man here who hasn't sailed on some floating garbage dumps," snapped a furious sailor, the self-appointed spokesman for the group. "But, this hotel out-stinks anything we have ever seen."

"I admit this is an old hotel," replied the apprehensive clerk. "But, I know the manager keeps it clean."

"Then somebody had better check out room nineteen," whined a fat, middle-aged guest.

"Yeah. Somebody died in there about fifty years ago," said a grim-faced man.

"Call an undertaker and bury the body," snapped the spokesman for the group.

The clerk grabbed a master key to room nineteen. He was followed through the dim hallway by the disgruntled guests. The clerk stopped before the entrance to room nineteen as his nostrils were seared by an overpowering stench. He fumbled with the lock, and, hesitatingly, flung open the door. A deadly wave of sickening sweet odor rushed from the room.

"*Mon Dieu!* Something bad has happened in there." The clerk crossed himself. He covered his face with a handkerchief and cautiously entered the gloomy room.

The clerk, and his disgruntled guests, discovered the lifeless body of Marcus Baldwin stretched out on the bed. The body had turned to a sickening greenish-black color. Nauseous waves of odor drifted up from the corpse. Baldwin's face was contorted into a twisted, bloated mask.

"He's been dead an awful long time," said a guest. He peered down at the body.

"This man didn't check in until last night," snapped the clerk. He walked out of the room and closed the door when the guests left the death chamber.

"Then, you had better call the police," suggested the middle-aged guest. "There's something funny about a body decomposing so fast."

Subsequently, a coroner performed an autopsy on the odorous corpse. "I can't understand it," he informed a detective. "The man was alive only a few hours before. Yet, the body has decomposed much too rapidly."

"There's a lot of sailors living on the waterfront," said the detective. "Maybe this guy caught some unknown disease in the Orient."

"Not likely. Let me run a few more tests. You had better find out who he was and what he was doing." The coroner turned away, and stared with a puzzled frown at the decaying corpse.

The police established that Marcus Baldwin had spent the hours prior to his death in a waterfront bar. "He was in a good mood," a bartender recalled. "He bought a couple of rounds of drinks and said he was shipping out in a couple of days."

"Did he make any unusual statements?" asked the policemen.

"He was just a happy drunk. No! Wait a minute! I asked why he was so happy. He said it was a special celebration," the bartender continued. "He said: '*mon vieux*, this is the tenth anniversary of the day that I took a mummy from an underground tomb in Egypt.' He seemed pleased that he had escaped some Pharoah's curse."

This information brought an expert Egyptologist into the case. The Marseilles detective listened intently as a professor told of a curse placed on mummies by ancient Egyptian priests. "Many people have died after entering a tomb," the expert explained. "Many of their deaths occur in a mysterious manner. The old priests slipped a plague germ in the tombs. Whoever touches a mummy is afflicted with the disease."

"Do you mean that this man may have been poisoned?" asked an incredulous detective.

"One theory says a subtle, slow-acting poison was

placed in the embalming substance," replied the professor. "The toxic action could be retarded for as much as ten years. When the despoiler of the tomb touches a mummy, he is marked for ultimate death."

The baffled lawmen dismissed the professor's hypothesis as too fantastic. Nevertheless, he was intrigued by Baldwin's mysterious death and his search for a more realistic answer continued. Specialists in rare diseases were consulted; none could provide a clue as to how Baldwin died.

Ultimately, the odorous corpse was buried in a pauper's field. The case was closed.

Even today, old timers on the Marseilles police department remember the strange case of the odorous corpse. Some had the profound belief that Marcus Baldwin violated an ancient tomb. His act of despoliation ended in a horrible death in a cheap hotel room exactly ten years later.

CROMWELL— DID HE HEX THE KING'S ARMIES?

Oliver Cromwell (1599-1656) was a bold politician and a crafty military genius who impressed his design on English history. Even today, there are historians who profess widely varied opinions on his political, military, and governing abilities. Regardless of their attitudes toward the controversial Lord Protector, they admit that Cromwell was so powerful that he could turn down the royal crown of England in 1656.

Cromwell's "crowning victory," in his own words, came on the third morning of September, 1651, when he routed the armies of King Charles the Second at Worcester. Raymond Echard, the British historian, tells of an incident that shrouds this battle with occult mystery.

On the dawning of the battle morning, Oliver Cromwell awakened Colonel Thomas Lindsay, the senior officer in his regiment. "You must accompany me on a mission," Cromwell told his sleepy-eyed officer. "I must meet someone in the woods and I need your protection."

The mystified officer presumed that his commander was to meet officers from the king's armies, men who had changed their loyalty. Following a brief ride from their encampment, Cromwell and Colonel Lindsay tied their horses at the edge of a thick forest.

"Follow me," ordered Cromwell. He followed a path through the brushy thickets.

Colonel Lindsay reported later that he was suddenly conscious of an "unnatural, indescribable feeling of discomfort." "Something there caused me to tremble with more consternation than I have ever felt in all of my battles," he stated. "I stopped, unable to continue."

"Come forward!" Cromwell ordered harshly. "Don't be upset by the fog and mists."

"I can go no further," pleaded the colonel.

"Remain there, but watch closely," Cromwell commanded. "I must have a witness to the proceedings."

Colonel Lindsay watched as Cromwell walked a short distance into the woods. Suddenly, the misty fog purled away from a clearing. A strange figure materialized in the gloom. Lindsay described the entity as "a grave-faced bearded elderly man." The figure was covered by a hooded robe, similar to the garments worn by monks. The old man unfurled a large roll of parchment and passed it to Cromwell.

Cromwell glanced at the writing on the parchment. "This is only for seven years!" he shouted, furiously.

"There can be no more," the hooded man said.

"Our agreement was for one hundred and twenty!" protested Cromwell, shouting. "This is the morning of the battle. You have tricked me!" He handed the parchment back to the hooded figure.

"It can only be for seven years," replied the old man. "If you don't take it, others will gladly accept the terms."

Cromwell's face contorted with fury. "Make it fourteen years. We had an agreement," he said harshly.

"It cannot possibly be for any longer time," said the entity.

Reluctantly, Cromwell grabbed the parchment roll and bade farewell to the hooded man. The fog returned to shield the strange being as Cromwell walked back to his astonished officer.

"Don't be upset," Cromwell smiled. He waved the parchment; it seemed to be a wonderous prize. "Now, Lindsay! We have the battle! The king's army is defeated. Let us start the battle!"

Shaking with fear, Colonel Lindsay followed Cromwell that morning. Cromwell encouraged his men to battle the king's men. "After the first charge, I deserted my post in Cromwell's legions and asked sanctuary from Reverend Thoroughgood, who ministered to the parish at Grimstone, Norfolk county."

Colonel Lindsay told the minister about his eerie experience. The ashen-faced clergyman listened incredulously to the officer's amazing story. "There is no need to ask how the battle has gone," the minister said. "If what you say is true, Cromwell is in league with the devil. The curse of

Beelzebub is on King Charles. The royal forces are hexed by the demons!"

Colonel Lindsay was charged with desertion. Oliver Cromwell offered a large reward for his capture. "Dead or alive!" snapped the victorious Lord Protector of Parliament. Lindsay eluded the search parties and rushed across the English channel to exile on the continent.

In writing of the incident, historian Echard maintained his impartiality as a scholar. "How far Lindsay is to be believed, and how far the story is to be accounted credible, is left to the reader's faith and judgment, and not to any determination of my own," he concluded.

The fascinating sequel in the incident was Oliver Cromwell's death on the third day of September, 1658—precisely seven years after his alleged meeting with the hooded figure in the woods near Worcester.

Before you dismiss the incident as a hoax, you might consider that every culture and every land has myths and legends concerning elderly, grave-faced men in hooded robes. Some occult authorities believe these are the legendary "masters," benign manipulators of human activities. Others claim there are two groups; one for good, the other for evil.

Charles Fort, the irascible scholar who delighted in tweaking the nose of the scientific establishment, was aware of these and other unusual historical incidents. When he wrote *Lo!* in the late nineteen twenties, he said:

". . . There may be occult things, beings and events, and there may be something of the nature of an occult police force, which operates to divert human suspicions, and to supply explanations that are good enough for whatever (minds) human beings have—or that, if there be occult mischiefmakers and occult ravagers, they may be of a world also of other beings that are acting to check them, not benevolently, but to divert suspicions from themselves, because, they too, may be exploiting life upon this earth, but in ways more subtle, and in orderly or organized fashion."

Is it possible to make a pact with the invisibles and change the ebb of history? Or, was Colonel Lindsay's tale a delightful fantasy to excuse his cowardly behavior on the battlefield?

We shall have to supply our own answer.

DR. JOHN: MASTER OF THE GRIS-GRIS HEX

A shy, unattractive girl longs for a handsome husband. She obtains a voodoo charm blessed by a powerful master of voodoo. Shortly after she starts to wear the charm, the best-looking men in town ask her for dates.

A gossiping woman spreads lies in a tranquil neighborhood. A victim of her vicious tongue seeks out the powers of a mysterious practitioner of the dark arts. A *gris-gris* doll is created. The gossiping woman is afflicted with a strange malady; she loses her voice.

There are millions of people today who believe in the powers of voodoo. And, in the annals of this pagan practice, no practitioner was more powerful than a New Orleans hex master, Dr. John. A giant, scar-faced Negro, Dr. John was the undisputed voodoo king of New Orleans for four decades.

Although his real name was John Montanet, Dr. John claimed to be the son of a Senegalese king. "I was kidnapped by slavers as a child. I was sold to a cruel plantation owner in Cuba," he informed his clients in a hypnotic voice. "I vowed to win my freedom. No man should be a slave for another. I learned the black art—voodoo. I was trained by powerful wizards to hex my master until he set me free!"

Dr. John came to New Orleans in the early 1830s when that community was a booming, rip-roaring international community. Tight-lipped mountain men from the hard-luck hollows of Tennessee and Kentucky mingled with rich, frontier fur-traders down from the head waters of the Missouri. Cowboys from the western plains roared into town to gamble, drink, and duel with Spanish noblemen and their women. Sailors from strange lands pulled their ships to the wharves, exchanging their exotic cargoes for the south's cotton. Pirates and buccaneers mingled with

the best people, or the worst scoundrels, from a dozen countries.

Naturally, Dr. John's voodoo practice flourished in such a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

"He became a man of powerful position and enormous influence," explained a New Orleans historian. "Dr. John considered midnight dances and the elaborate rituals of voodoo to be a throw-back to primitive times. His black tricks were dispensed from a dimly-lit studio. He claimed his *ju-ju* was so powerful that he did not require dances and rituals."

Dr. John's studio must have been a frightening spectacle to a new visitor. Clients who entered the dimly-lit voodoo chamber blinked rapidly to adjust their eyes to the darkness. The scant light came from a few black candles. The candle holders were grisly human skulls. At a far corner of the room sat Dr. John: an ugly, scarred Negro giant sprawled on a gilted throne. He was surrounded by a devilish collection of stuffed reptiles. A live rattlesnake was coiled peacefully in his lap. Occasionally, Dr. John interrupted his interview and dropped a scrap of food into a jar of poisonous spiders. A ghastly human skeleton dangled from the ceiling. The stark white bones were illuminated by the flames from the black candles.

The black Cagliostro's mesmeric voice boomed through the dimness. "You are in the inner chamber of the voodoo master," he announced, dramatically. "State your troubles."

Dr. John worked his black magic for at least one hundred clients each day. Wide-eyed slaves, wealthy plantation owners, and giggling young girls on a daredevil lark, were ushered into his voodoo chamber. Many wanted a hex or curse cast on some enemy. Others sought his help in removing a hex put on them by another witch doctor.

"Dr. John was the favorite of the influential white property owners in New Orleans," continued the historian. "Some of his strange potions were more reliable than the advice from a family physician. The old hex master also dispensed love potions, hate potions, herbal medicines, charms, and voodoo amulets."

The voodoo king practiced his black arts for such prominent historical personalities as Sam Houston, Jim Bowie, and Andrew (Old Hickory) Jackson. ". . . It was

whispered that many politicians sought his favors to hex an opponent," stated a newspaper obituary after Dr. John's death.

Dr. John's fortune was rumored to be more than a million dollars. "He lived like a sultan in a 60-room mansion," the historian continued. "The rooms contained nubile female slaves purchased from the auction block. In addition to his concubines, Dr. John had at least 15 wives. He fathered about sixty children."

When Dr. John's carriage rolled through the streets of New Orleans, he was cheered by crowds of beggars. "It was his habit to throw gold coins to the beggars," explained the historian. "He had an 'easy come, easy go' attitude toward money."

Dr. John frequently announced his darkest suspicions of banks, bankers, and high interest rates on loans. "They are tools of the devil," his clients were informed. Dr. John's surplus funds were buried secretly on the grounds of his estate. After his death, newspapers estimated there was $250,000 of money mouldering in his special earth vaults. ". . . it is believed to be buried near his home," a newsman reported. Dozens of people scoured the grounds for a hopeful bonanza.

Dr. John's prowess as a master of voodoo created many enemies. New Orleans sizzled with excited rumors when Dr. John was hailed into court. Old court records tell of the slaves of plantation owner Samuel Wilson paying $62 to Dr. John to stop a hex. Showers of small stones had descended on the Wilson mansion; the slaves believed their master had been cursed by a notorious witch doctor. When Wilson heard of the $62 payment, he complained to the New Orleans chief of police.

"There are no laws against voodoo," the chief of police stated.

"Then I will sue the old fraud," announced the plantation owner.

After a jury trial a judgment of $62 was given to the plantation owner. However, his victory was short lived. The *Daily Delta* edition of October 21, 1867, reported that moments after the verdict against Dr. John, the landowner's home was again pelted by stones. ". . . the bouncing rocks appear to come from nowhere," the newspaper related. Legends claim that Samuel Wilson's home

was under continual assault from these paranormal stones. The phenomena ended abruptly when the plantation owner apologized to Dr. John. Peace with the voodoo prince was important in New Orleans. The law was one thing; voodoo was a different matter.

As Dr. John grew older, his fortune dwindled. His mansion of wives followed the old *Ju-Ju* master on his nightly prowls to bury his money. Secretly, they dug up his hoarded gold. Several of his friends made investments for the voodoo king. Many vanished; others became wealthy and refused to honor their commitments. "I must learn to write and read," Dr. John vowed.

He hired a young Negro to teach him to sign his name. The unscrupulous instructor promptly taught the aging voodoo king to write his name. ". . . right at the bottom of a blank piece of paper, which was then filled in with contracts and deeds," a newsman reported.

Despite the instructor's reputation, Dr. John was legally forced to give up his mansion. He became bitter because people of his own race would cheat him. A son of the voodoo king had prospered in business; he pleaded with his father to move into his home.

"But, I am Dr. John," insisted the aging Negro. "What will my people think when I live off my son and his family?"

"Papa, who cares?" replied the son. "We love you."

"In the death of John Montanet, or Dr. John, at the age of 100 years, the most extraordinary African in New Orleans was lost," Lafcadio Hearn wrote. "He was in many ways a humbug yet he may have believed sincerely in the efficacy of certain rites of his own. He stated that he had a Master that he was bound to obey, that he could read the will of his master in the twinkling of the stars. Often, on a clear night, the neighbors used to watch him standing alone, pulling his woolly beard, and talking in an unknown language to some invisible being."

Like Dr. John, voodoo is one of the most persistent mysteries of the world. Even the most advanced scholars of the occult are bewildered by the claims, phenomena, and legends of this black art. Some claim voodoo is a primitive form of pagan rituals that have persisted into the space age. These critics claim the power of voodoo lies in the subtle, psychological effects on the believer's mind.

Others claim voodoo is a powerful manifestation of the unknown demons of darkness. "It can be used for good or evil," they declare. "The choice is left to the black magicians."

Regardless of our own thoughts on voodoo, we will not dissuade the millions of people who embrace voodoo as their religious, medical, and supernatural belief. Virtually all of the people in the rural areas of South America pay strict attention to voodoo. They don't want a *gris-gris* doll formed in their image.

BAD LUCK HEX OF THE BROKEN MIRROR

Is there any validity to the old adage that "a broken mirror creates seven years of bad luck?" It may have been random chance, coincidence, or the unconscious actions of a newlywed couple. "I don't care what it was," declared James Adkins. "I know what happened to us. We handle mirrors mighty carefully these days."

Adkins, and his bride, Mary Jo, rented an apartment in a high-rise complex in Detroit, Michigan, on the evening of March 3, 1969. They were twenty years old, married less than two weeks, and they had come north from Chattanooga, Tennessee to seek fortune in "Motor City."

James Adkins hoped to find work in an automobile factory. "There just wasn't anything around home," he said. "As soon as we got settled, Mary Jo planned on going back to college."

The young couple were pleased with their apartment. They started immediately to add their personal touch to the furnished rooms. "Mary Jo wanted me to hang up some pictures," related James Adkins. "I was hammering a nail into the wall when my wife tripped on the edge of a rug. She fell against my arm and I slammed the hammer against a large wall mirror. It broke into smithereens. At least a thousand slivers of glass flew out on the floor."

Mrs. Adkins broke her right wrist in the fall. James Adkins scrambled to help his bride and ran slivers of glass in his hands.

"I took Mary Jo to a hospital for emergency treatment," he said. "I used a pocket knife to pick the slivers from my hand. We were laughing about breaking mirrors and bad luck when we walked to our car in the hospital parking lot."

The stunned couple discovered a burglar had broken into their car. "Our clothes, all of Mary Jo's records, and my expensive electric guitar were stolen," Adkins related.

"Later, my insurance company wouldn't settle on the theft. I got a lawyer to sue them. He charged us one hundred in cash before taking the case. That must have been all he needed for a bus ticket. He took off and I've never seen him again."

Two days after the mirror was smashed, James Adkins awakened with a throbbing pain in his hand. "One of the sliver places festered," he said. "It got worse and cost us $132 in doctor bills."

The following month Mary Jo drove the family car to the grocery store. As she pulled into a supermarket parking lot, a runaway truck smashed into her car. While she talked to a policeman about the accident, someone stole her purse. "We lost $50 in cash, credit cards, and our marriage certificate," she said.

Their ill fortune continued when a burglar broke into their apartment and absconded with their television set, other belongings, and their meager wardrobe of new clothes. James was unable to settle with the insurance company on the automobile accident. "They offered a flat two hundred dollars, take it or leave it," he said. "The body shop estimates were more than nine hundred. I had to trade cars, got a lemon, and started quarreling with the car dealer."

Misfortune followed the newlyweds like a dark beast of prey. "I got a job at a factory and lost it the first day. Our new alarm clock didn't work," James reported. "I got hired at another place, worked three days, and they went out on strike. Buddy, you can't believe the run of bad luck we had."

"It was never anything too big," explained Mary Jo. "Just a lot of little things that kept us in a turmoil. We lost all of the peace and serenity in our life."

The young couple sat down one afternoon and totaled up their bills. "We were running out of money," they said. "We decided we had to do something."

"I had visited Doc Anderson, the seer in Rossville, Georgia before we were married," Mary Jo said. "This was before I met James. I was going with another boy and I wanted to know if I would marry him. Doc Anderson is called 'The Man Who Sees Tomorrow' because he has the gift of prophesy. He told me that I would be asked to

marry, but I should refuse the man and wait for a boy named James. Things turned out as he predicted."

"We decided that if Doc Anderson could predict the future, he should be able to turn us around on the bad luck," James Adkins said. "We took off for Rossville, Georgia. I wanted to see that man before another spell of bad luck set in."

The couple drove non-stop to Chattanooga and passed over the Georgia state line into Rossville. Bleary-eyed, tired, yet confident, they pulled into the parking lot in front of Doc Anderson's ESP studio at 302 Gordon Avenue. "We must have looked like the last of the hobos," laughed Mary Jo. "We had nothing but hand-me-down clothes, no sleep, and just a few dollars left to our name. We didn't even have an appointment with Doc Anderson."

Fortunately for the young couple, the powerful prophet was in his office and available for consultation. A robust heavyweight of a seer, Doc Anderson has frequently proven his prowess as a prophet. In print before the event, he predicted the deaths of Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and scores "true" with numerous predictions each year.

"We got into his office and he told us we'd had a run of bad luck," recalled James Adkins. "I started to doubt his ability then. It didn't take anyone with ESP ability to see we were down on our luck."

The young couple were soon convinced of the seer's ability to plumb the depths of the unknown. "You have had some unusual bad luck," Anderson said. "It started on the night of March third when you broke a mirror in your apartment in Detroit."

"How did you know that?" asked an incredulous, open-jawed James Adkins.

"I know many things," Anderson replied, cryptically. "You broke the mirror when your wife accidentally fell against your arm." The seer went on to relate their misfortunes of the past few months. The couple listened quietly, enchanted by the seer's remarkable display of ESP ability. "That is your past. What do you want me to do for your future?" Anderson inquired.

"We want the bad luck hex removed," Mary Jo Adkins replied.

"I'd like to know where we can go to find a little pros-

perity," said her husband. "If we go back to Detroit, will things be all right? If not, where should we go?"

Anderson closed his eyes and entered a self-induced trance. "Not Detroit," he intoned in a low voice. "Bad luck will continue there . . . I see nothing but dark clouds and mean times there. I see . . . a large city. Very big . . . Atlanta . . . go to Atlanta! You will find peace, prosperity, and happiness in Atlanta. Only there can you break the aura of misfortune. You must go to Atlanta."

The seer's eyes opened slowly and he blinked. "Did I give you anything that provided hope?" he asked, a twinkle in his eyes.

"When I ask a man for advice, I follow it," announced James Adkins. "We're heading for Atlanta. We're not even going back to Detroit. We didn't leave enough there to amount to anything, anyway."

Mary Jo looked at her husband with new respect. "I agree," she said. "Now, let's pay this man and head for a new life."

James Adkins reluctantly reached for his wallet. Doc Anderson waved his hand in a gesture of dismissal. The seer reached for his wallet and handed a twenty dollar bill to the young man. "Son, you will find work very soon in Atlanta," he said. "But you can't leave here with thirteen dollars and fourteen cents in your pocket."

Incredulous, James Adkins counted his change. He had four pennies and a dime in his pocket. He knew there was a meager thirteen dollars in his wallet. "We can't accept your money," he protested.

"Buddy, you will find work in Atlanta as soon as you get there," replied the seer, stuffing the money into his client's shirt pocket. "You will repay me when you get on your feet again. You're going to make a lot of money down there."

The young couple thanked the seer for his generosity, left his office, and headed down the freeway to Atlanta. The next few days seemed almost miraculous to the couple who had been plagued with bad luck. There is a note of awe in James Adkins' voice when he tells of their whirlwind arrival in Atlanta.

"We pulled into a gas station," he recounted. "It was a big truck stop. A man came out of the station with fury on his face. His night man had called in sick. I don't under-

stand why, or how it happened, but he came right up to me, chomped down on his cigar, and offered me a job at good wages. There was a nice motel across the street. He owned that, too. Gave us a free room—a regular suite—until we got settled. Six weeks of pumping gas and another customer offered me another job."

Less than a year in Atlanta and the hexed young man and his bride have purchased a home. James Adkins works for a national corporation, earning more than $1,000 a month; his future is established with the firm.

Mary Jo has resumed her education. "We have been blessed with good fortune since we visited Doc Anderson," she said. "If he hadn't done what he did, we might still be breaking bones and having bad luck."

"We are convinced that the worst possible accident is to break a mirror," remarked her husband. "We handle them very carefully. And, if we ever break another one, I am chartering a fast jet airplane to get up to Rossville so Doc Anderson can remove the hex."

CURSE OF THE SERPENT PEOPLE

Several years ago; in 1963, a New York business executive flew to Mexico to search for a legendary treasure of the Aztecs. Myths claim that the Aztec Emperor, Montezuma, ordered the wealth of his nation hidden from the rapacious, gold-hungry Spanish Conquistadors.

"I came into possession of an old map supposedly drawn by Aztec priests," explained John Sinclair. "We pushed into the wilderness of southwest Chihuahua. My partner on the expedition and I could barely contain our excitement when we realized the map was proving true."

After several days of intense searching in the remote mountains, John Sinclair and his expedition found a cave entrance blocked by a large boulder. "Our guide was unable to decipher the inscription so we hunted up a *curadera*, or witch doctor, from a native village down the trail."

The treasure hunters clustered around the enormous rock as the wrinkled old native peered intently at the inscription. "It is a place of danger," announced the *curadera*. "The curse of the serpent people is on this place."

John Sinclair's pulse quickened as he remembered his research into Aztec history. The Aztec temples contained enormous, snake-skinned drums that were pounded to a throbbing frenzy by Aztec priests. The Aztecs also conducted sacrificial ceremonies where the most beautiful maidens of the land were flung alive into slimy, snake-filled pits.

"We camped at the cave entrance and tried to figure out some way of entering the cavern," Sinclair continued. "I still believe the wealth of Montezuma is hidden there. The boulder that blocked the entrance weighed hundreds of tons. We didn't have dynamite or the equipment to remove it."

Sinclair inspected the terrain above the cave and noticed a small hole leading down toward the treasure cav-

ern. Sinclair spliced two ropes for his descent into the dark pit.

"Don't go!" The voice of the *curadera* crackled through the underbrush. "Men have gone mad from having looked in there. The serpent rules down there."

Sinclair disregarded the warning. "It was pitch black in the shaft, but I had a small flashlight to guide my way down the hole," he related.

Suddenly, Sinclair's feet touched the bottom of the cave. There was a twisting, churning motion. The cave floor seemed to move beneath him. He lost his balance and fell. His flashlight skittered across the cavern. "I raised my head and saw the horror that surrounded me," he said, tautly. "I was surrounded by snakes. They were everywhere, giant serpents that rolled and twisted. Small snakes twisted and squirmed because I was pressing down on them. It was sheer horror."

The snakes ran, crawled, darted, coiled, and twisted over Sinclair's body. The repulsive reptiles struck again and again at the lens of the flashlight. Suddenly, the last rays of light vanished as the snakes covered the flashlight with their twisting bodies. Sinclair screamed a high-pitched wail, the sound of a man surrounded by the things of which nightmares are made.

"I had a slender thread of sanity left," Sinclair remembered. "I knew I had to get to the rope and back up the shaft. It was my only chance. I gained my footing and moved over the twisting bed of snakes. Miraculously, I wasn't bitten although I don't know if these were a poisonous specimen. I grabbed the rope. It was the most wonderful feeling in my life."

"Get me up!" Sinclair screamed. "Pull me out of here!" It was the cry of a crazed man.

Sinclair braced his foot on what he presumed to be a boulder at the bottom of the shaft. "I was just feeling through the dark," he explained. "I climbed up on what I thought was a rock. It moved. I was standing on a squirming ball of snakes."

His companions jerked and pulled Sinclair to the surface. Horror-stricken and babbling like an insane man, John Sinclair reached the welcome warmth of sunlight. "I started to scream. I couldn't stop," he said. "The *curadera* ran to his bag and mixed some sort of potion. My friends

had to physically hold me down so the medicine could be poured into my mouth."

After John Sinclair returned to normalcy, he questioned the Indian natives about the "curse of the serpent people." They shrugged knowingly as he blurted out the details of his dreadful experience.

"It was the ancient ones," they replied. "The Aztecs. The serpent people. They wanted their treasure guarded by the snakes. Snakes are serpents, *senor*. There are some things that a man should not do. There are places where no man should go."

John Sinclair returned to his business in New York. "My nightmares were so terrible that I obtained psychiatric help," he said. "I hoped they could hypnotize me or something and erase the memory of that experience. It was unsuccessful."

An ominous sequel to his frightening experience occurred in May, 1964, a year after he entered the snake pit. "My skin began to erupt with sores and scabs. I was in the most painful situation of my life. Any clothes or anything that came into contact with my skin caused pain," Sinclair continued. "My doctor gave me a medication which kept me drowsy and barely conscious. On the sixteenth day I woke one morning and discovered I had actually shed my old skin and had a new one. My God! I was molting just like a snake!"

Each summer, since then, John Sinclair must endure this painful molting process. "My doctor said it was some substance I had contacted down in the serpent pit," he related. "My psychiatrist claims it is nothing more than a physical manifestation of my experience. What do you believe? I think it is the curse of the serpent people!"

As you may have surmised, John Sinclair is not the real name of this individual. However, the facts and the events are just as he described them to me. His medical records were made available to me. His physicians are astonished at the annual shedding of skin. "We have several scientific names for such maladies," remarked his doctor. "But, after his experience in Mexico, I wonder if there isn't something to those old warnings about venturing into forbidden areas."

John Sinclair looked over at his doctor. "I know darn well there is," he said, quietly.

ZOROASTER— MASTER OF THE CHALDEAN CURSE

Zoroaster, the Chaldean wizard who ruled in ancient Babylon, was a mean man with a hex and a powerful sorcerer who astonished his enemies with deadly curses. "What makes Zoroaster run?" may well have been asked by some ancient Babylonian scribe.

Legends report that Zoroaster was one of the busiest men in that ancient kingdom. He created the art of healing through herbs. Later, he established schools to teach astronomy, science and medicine. Some occultists believe Zoroaster originated the orphan science of astrology and devised the signs of the Zodiac.

Legends that are thousands of years old proclaim his impressive occult wizardry.

"He was a master of enchantment," these stories declared. "His powerful sorcery made powerful hexes that struck fear in the hearts of his enemies. War was eliminated. Zoroaster could cast spells to bring disaster down on the heads of his enemies."

According to one legend, Zoroaster was resting after an evening meal when a courier rushed up with news of an enemy army marching on the city. "My general said to inform you these dogs plan to attack in the morning," the courier reported.

"Tell your generals to cast away their fears," Zoroaster replied. "I shall make magic tonight. The enemy will be surprised if they cross the river."

There was a small glow in the eastern sky when the enemy soldiers entered their boats and rowed toward Babylon. Under the cloak of dawn, they planned a lightning attack against the city. However, they failed to plan a defense against Zoroaster's magic. Unable to see the shore line, and unaccustomed to the terrain, the enemy general led his forces directly into the midst of a marshy swamp.

Boats floundered in the tall reeds. Soldiers lost their sense of direction and furiously fought their way into the center of the swamp. The Babylonian soldiers needed two days to rescue the enemy commandos from the swamp.

"It is just another of Zoroaster's miraculous curses," a smug Babylomian soldier told a group of prisoners. "There is no greater wizard."

Zoroaster also had the power to alter the weather, according to legend. Although none of these incidents can be documented, it would appear that a gifted genius with some unusual talent once ruled Babylon.

THEIR WEDDING WAS HEXED

It is doubtful that Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Grossman will ever forget their wedding day in New York on May 11, 1969. Hurrying to the church, Raymond Grossman slipped and fell down a stairway. He sprained his ankle and obtained emergency treatment at a neighborhood medical clinic. Leaving the doctor's office, the limping bridegroom slammed a car door on his hand. "You'd better get to the church or you're going to have to be carried there in pieces," remarked the physician, fixing Grossman's wounded hand.

Grossman grimly left the clinic and carefully entered his automobile. On his drive to the church, the hexed bridegroom ran a red light and collided in a "fender-bender" accident with a bakery truck.

Unknown to Mr. Grossman, his bride-to-be was also experiencing a rare run of bad luck.

As she rushed from her home, the young woman's wedding dress snagged onto a door knob. "There was a loud sound of ripping fabric," she recalled. "Seconds later, I was standing in the doorway in half a wedding dress."

Her best dresses were packed for the honeymoon. The luggage had already been picked up by the bridegroom. "I ended up in an old dress that I should have discarded months ago," Mrs. Grossman said. "As we were driving toward the church, my father turned to say something to me. He drove our car through a barricade and into a patch of fresh cement."

The family hailed a passing taxi and hurried to the church. As the bride stepped from the vehicle, she twisted her foot and ripped the heel off her shoe. "I was like a little orphan girl," she remembered. "I sat down on the steps and tried on shoes worn by the wedding guests. I finally found a pair. The owner sat through the service in her bare feet."

Battered, bandaged, and exhausted from their experiences, the couple were finally prepared to start the ceremony. "That's when the best man remembered he had left the marriage license at his apartment across town," recalled Raymond Grossman, wryly. "The ceremony was postponed until we produced the magical piece of paper."

Many hours after the scheduled ceremony, the couple were wed. "I borrowed my dad's car for the honeymoon because the fender bender had wrecked mine," Ray Grossman said. "We were at our hotel in Canada when I remembered our luggage was in my car back at the garage."

It was indeed a hexed ceremony. "We'll never get a divorce," smiled Mrs. Grossman. "Neither of us could live through the dangers of another marriage ceremony."

DOC ANDERSON— PROPHETIC MASTER OF THE UNKNOWN

R. C. "Doc" Anderson, of 302 Gordon Avenue, Rossville, Georgia, is an undisputed master of ESP and his uncanny predictive prowess is known to people throughout the world. A Chattanooga television personality recently characterized Doc Anderson as ". . . a master mentalist whose predictive ability defies description. He is the man who sees tomorrow and his forecasts are made in print prior to the event. Even under these rigid restrictions, Doc Anderson has a remarkable 95% accuracy in his predictions."

In addition to using his astonishing ESP abilities to assist his troubled clients, Doc Anderson has gathered information on many elements of the occult. "I roamed the world as a young man and studied under the occult practitioners in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa, and South America," he explained. "I know you are writing a book on hexes. Buddy, I have seen things that defy the mind of any man. An old voodoo papa down in the islands revealed his *ju-ju* secrets to me. There is power in those things. I've seen people shrivel up and die after some unscrupulous witch doctor fashioned a *gris-gris* doll and cursed his victim with death."

Doc Anderson is a robust, hearty six-foot-two-inch giant of a man whose friendly face towers above any crowd. People from all over the world fly to Rossville seeking advice and help from the southern seer. Recently, an ailing woman was brought by ambulance from Toledo, Ohio, and carried into the psychic's office. "I am not a healer who claims medical doctors are of no value," Doc Anderson explained. "I exercise caution in any use of my paranormal powers. If a person is ill, I suggest they pray because prayer can lead them to a good doctor."

Despite his protests of letting a doctor handle medical

problems, the ailing young mother walked from Anderson's office. "It was a miracle," said Steve Bolton, her husband. "My wife was just wasting away. We had the doctors check her over. She suffered from a half dozen things, ranging from gall bladder trouble to a bad heart. We went to see Doc Anderson and he made his magic. You know, they tell me he never lets anyone into that one room in his office building."

Regardless of whether the woman suffered from psychologically-induced illness, or was actually seriously ill from physical disorders, the fact remains that she entered the seer's office on a stretcher. She walked to her car after the treatments. "She is as healthy as she ever was," enthused Steve Bolton. "Her illness is now just a past memory. Doc removed her back luck aura."

Doc Anderson has also been known to create a little *ju-ju* for a client. John R. Shaw, a wealthy Texas oilman, is the president of the J. R. Shaw Oil Company of Dallas and Albany, Texas. "I have been pounding iron and drilling wells for as long as I can remember," Shaw said, recently. "Some time ago, my luck turned bad. I was really cursed with a long string of dry holes. Things were so bad that the other oilmen followed me around to find out where I was drilling. When they saw me drilling at a certain location, they headed the other way. They knew there wasn't any oil where John Shaw was pounding iron."

One afternoon, Shaw was sitting glumly in a waiting room at the Los Angeles airport. "I really felt cursed," he said. "I was given an issue of a magazine with a story on Doc Anderson in it. The man who handed the magazine to me must have been my guardian angel. The magazine was several months old and all of the predictions made by Doc had proven true."

Shaw cancelled his flight back to Dallas. He purchased a ticket on the next plane to Chattanooga. "I wanted to meet this seer," he explained. "If he could predict the future, he just might be able to spot a couple of oil wells for me."

The rest is part of a fast-growing legend in the oil industry. "Doc told me to drill in three locations in Jones county, Texas," explained Shaw. "Everyone of those wells turned out to be a moneymaker. He changed my luck from bad to the best. There is nothing like looking at your

bank account and knowing those oil wells are going to keep pumping the money into it."

Perhaps less dramatic than spotting oil wells is Doc Anderson's remarkable ability to counsel people who have problems in their marriages. "I'll work it out for you," explains Doc Anderson when a husband or wife seeks his advice.

Does he use ESP? Voodoo or black magic on an erring spouse? "They are all the same thing, a gift of God's power," Anderson remarked. "I never use my powers for evil, although many people have asked me to hex someone or place a curse on any enemy. That would be just like committing murder."

Doc Anderson is careful to maintain an even temper. "I have to watch that I don't get angry," he explained. "If I started yelling and hollering someone might be afflicted with a hex. I might unknowingly curse an innocent person with bad luck."

Doc Anderson also rejects the dehumanizing forces in our space age society. "I have to frequently restore vitality back into people," he said. "There are people today who have become so concerned with trivial problems that they lose their natural instincts. These poor souls are like empty shells. They are surrounded by an aura of emptiness. There's no enjoyment to life."

Anderson's clients have reported many seemingly miraculous changes in their lives and personalities after visiting his ESP studio. "A lot of people hex themselves," declared the clairvoyant. "They need someone to lead them back to the right path. I like to see people in a happy mood."

THE DEADLY HEX ON MA BARKER'S GANG

J. Edgar Hoover, the F.B.I.'s long-time chief, once remarked that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has apprehended many men and women who have been vicious murderers with many notches on their gun stocks, yet, strangely, these assassins possessed a side to their natures that made them human and not totally despicable.

But of the Kate "Ma" Barker gang, the F.B.I. director was moved to state: "Without a single exception they were monsters and pity was a word of which they had never heard. They moved in a welter of blood, mail robberies, bank holdups, kidnapping and pitched machine gun battles; they loved nothing better than to kill a police officer, and if some innocent bystander fell to the same hail of bullets, that did not matter either. They executed their own traitors, bought over unfaithful police officers, fixed paroles and prison breaks. Their anarchy fouled the very roots of law and order."

Shortly after the gang had joined forces with Al Karpis, the mobsters mowed down Sheriff C. R. Kelly of West Plains, Missouri, when he approached their automobile on a routine check. The brutal slaughter of a police officer directed a firey blast of uncomfortable heat on the Barker-Karpis mob, and Ma fled to St. Paul, Minnesota, with her lover of the moment, Arthur Dunlop.

Although Ma had established a comfy love-nest for her and Arthur and had settled in for a rather lengthy stay, she began to feel uneasy about the situation. It has been suggested that the gory old girl might have been endowed with ESP abilities, for, time after time, she seemed to avoid the most cleverly laid plans of the police to capture her. In the words of J. Edgar Hoover: "It was uncanny the way the Barker-Karpis gang, throughout its lifetime, was able to smell danger before it was too late."

"I've got that bad feelin'," Ma complained to Arthur one day. "I got a feelin' that spells cops."

"Whatcha mean, honey?" Dunlop yawned, glancing up from the newspaper he was reading. "Says here the cops are looking for you in Missouri and Kansas."

"Aw, but you can never trust them cops," Ma complained. "I wouldn't put it past them to put out some phony information just to try and throw me off."

"They'll never think of looking for us in St. Paul," Dunlop said, attempting to reassure his deadly paramour. "Let's not leave. I like it here."

Herman, one of Ma's loutish sons, snickered. "Hear that boys?" he said to his brothers, Lloyd, Fred, and Art. "Fancy ol' Arthur likes it here in St. Paul."

"Sure," Fred agreed. "He spotted some fancy clothes in that tailor shop down the way and he's gonna talk Ma into buying them for him."

"Come on, fellas," Dunlop growled. "Lay off, okay?"

"Sure, Arthur, sure," Herman grinned. "It's just that we is so jealous of how purty you look in your fancy duds."

"Shaddup!" Ma screamed at the lot of them. "How can I concentrate on my feelings with such fool yakking around me. My female intuition tells me we should get outta St. Paul."

"Aw, baby," Dunlop began. "Why don't you take it easy and. . . ."

"Shaddap!" Ma shouted again. "My female intuition has got another really bad feelin', lover man."

There was deadly menace in her voice, and Dunlop shut his mouth.

"Arthur, honey," she spoke softly to her lover, "you aint never told me where you went three nights ago and last night."

"Why I did so tell you," Dunlop said, beginning to pale. "I told you I went for a walk."

"Huh-uh," Ma shook her head. "You just don't like exercise that much. And a good whiff of fresh air would probably give you hives."

"What you think, Ma?" asked Herman.

"I think Mr. Fancy Arthur Dunlop decided to let the cops hear what a lovely singing voice he has," Ma Barker said, her eyes narrowing.

"Are you nuts, honey?" Dunlop blurted. "Why would I do such a thing. I love you, baby. I. . . ."

Ma's boys were on the unfortunate Dunlop before he could raise a hand to defend himself. When he opened his eyes again, he found himself on the shore of a lake, thickly surrounded by large trees and heavy brush. "W-where am I?" he moaned, trying to get his knees in under him so that he could push himself upright.

"Somehow I knew that you were going to ask that, lover," Ma Barker mocked the dazed man. "For whatever it might be worth to you, we're on the shore of a lake near Webster, Wisconsin."

Dunlop was rudely lifted to his feet by two of Ma's sons. "What are you going to do to me!" Dunlop's voice was shrill. He was not trying to maintain a show of courage. He knew Ma would kill on a whim.

"First you are going to take off all them Fancy clothes I gave you," Ma sneered. "Strip!"

"Kate, honey," Dunlop pleaded. "I never squealed on you. Believe me, baby!"

"You squealed all right, you cheap punk," Ma growled, "and I'm going to put the mark of the squealer on you!" Her thumb touched the button of a switchblade and the six-inch shaft sprung free of its handle.

"Baby! Kate! No!" Dunlop screamed. "I swear. . . ."

"Hold him tight boys," Ma commanded as she advanced to carve gangland's mark of the traitor into the cheek of the struggling, screaming Arthur Dunlop. Her grisly work finished, she stepped back and motioned her sons to let the unconscious Dunlop fall to the beach.

"Throw some water on him," Ma snapped. "I want that punk to see what he's going to get."

As Lloyd went down to the lake to get some water in an empty can, he caught a sign of movement out of the corner of his eye. "Hey, Herman, Art, Fred!" he yelled. "We've got company."

The Barker boys advanced on a clump of small bushes with their weapons at the ready. Soon they flushed their prey—an old gypsy woman, who had obviously seen the whole grisly tableau.

"You . . . you are murderers," she said, her rheumy eyes rolling wildly in her skull.

"Yep," Herman said simply, raising the muzzle of the .45 automatic to her temple.

"Wait!" Ma screamed. "Don't shoot! She's an old gypsy witch, I'll bet. She could put a hex on us."

"Ma," Lloyd protested. "We can't leave witnesses around to something like this."

"Hey, grandma," Ma said. "If we let you live, will you tell me my fortune?"

"You are an evil woman," the old woman shuddered.

"Yeah, yeah, I know that," Ma scowled. "I want you to tell me something I don't know."

The old woman closed her eyes, took a deep breath, held it for several seconds.

"What's she doing, Ma?" Herman asked. "She gonna kill herself by holding her breath?"

"Shaddap!" Ma scolded. "She's getting a vision or something."

At last the old woman opened her eyes and spoke in a trembling falsetto. "I see a great reptile angered by you. Ah, ah, I hear his terrible snorting. He brings you death in a swamp!"

"What a stupid fortune!" Ma snorted, striking the old woman viciously with the barrel of her revolver and knocking her unconscious.

The naked, bullet-shattered body of Arthur Dunlop was found by fishermen. Near his mangled, mutilated corpse, investigating officers found a blood-splattered woman's glove. "Well," an officer observed, "Ma Barker has left us with a gory souvenir of her trip up north."

In late January of 1935, residents of the Lake Weir area of Florida began to notice that an enormous, ancient alligator, which old-timers had christened "Old Joe," had begun to cough and grunt noisily during the night.

"Wonder what's been bothering Old Joe?" a shopkeeper wondered aloud one day. "He sure is raisin' a rumpus."

"Dunno, but Sam said it seemed to him that someone was staying in that old cottage right smack dab in the middle of Old Joe's private domain," a customer volunteered. "Sam likes to hunt, you know, and he swears he saw smoke coming out of the chimney one night."

"Man, that would sure rile Old Joe," chuckled another

customer. "He don't cotton none to strangers foulin' his nest. Only alligator I know that would call the sheriff and complain about invasion of privacy."

"Speakin' of the sheriff," the storekeeper mused, "do you figure I should ring him up about them trespassers in the old cottage?"

The storekeeper did call the sheriff, who, in turn, contacted the F.B.I. after he got a good look through his high-powered binoculars at the woman and man sitting on the cabin's porch.

One morning just at dawn, special agents of the F.B.I. moved cautiously through the mists that hung heavy over Lake Weir. When the cabin was surrounded, they called for Ma and Fred Barker to surrender.

Kate Barker appeared at a window with a machine gun held expertly in her arms. With a scowl furrowing her forehead and a curse splitting her lips, Ma Barker strafed the trees and undergrowth with a vicious chatter of machine gun lead.

The battle lasted at full heat for several hours. The special agents lobbed tear gas bombs into the cottage and directed heavy fire into the cottage from their own automatic weapons.

When the F.B.I. agents at last burst into the cabin, they found Ma Barker's lifeless body crumpled over her machine gun. Fred lay with a .45 automatic in each of his stiffening fists. Scattered around the mother mobster and her son were two Thompson sub-machine guns, a Browning twelve-guage shotgun, two .45 automatics, two Winchester rifles, and enough ammunition to supply a small army.

The old gypsy woman's hex had been realized. The angry grunts of the gigantic reptile, "Old Joe," had alerted the local authorities, who, in turn, had notified the F.B.I. "Old Joe" truly had brought death to Ma Barker, the cruel matriarch with a machine gun.

HORRIBLE HEX OF THE HAUNTED HOUSE

Is it possible that a house might act as a reservoir of emotions from past occupants? Can a room become a psychically charged storage battery that can deliver a terrible bolt of hatred from an old hex or curse?

Nearly all of us are sensitive to the degree that we have had the experience of walking into a "happy" house, a "depressing" room, or a room that appeared quite ordinary in every respect except that it seemed at once to bombard us with distinct impressions of unease or fear.

Individuals with a rather high degree of psychic sensitivity may enter a room and receive a certain influence from those who have been past occupants. They may experience the same emotions, share the same impulses, and, if the psychic impregnation has been strong enough, they may even catch glimpses of the former inhabitants. Although we do not understand precisely what has happened, we theorize that the human psyche, in a state of emotional intensity, is somehow able to "charge" a room in such a manner that, even years later, these same impulses might be received and experienced by others.

Some researchers have suggested that it is the great, intense emotional states, such as sorrow and fear, that seem to increase the radiation of these influences and to make their primary and secondary results more dramatic. An extreme emotional experience, such as that of murder, which took place in a violent paroxysm of hatred and terror, would, theoretically, leave the strongest psychic imprint and have the strongest evocatory power. According to this theory, those houses which have been scenes of violence, or which may have received the enmity, the curses, of former inhabitants, have become repositories of hatred and reservoirs of evil.

Walter Treichler had worked hard all of his life. He had

spent long years behind the counter as a master pharmacist, then, yielding to his wanderlust, he had become a common seaman in search of adventure. But always he knew that the life of a rolling stone would not appeal to him forever. One day, he vowed, he would build a beautiful home which he would call Fair Haven, and here he would settle down.

In 1928, Treichler began to erect the tangible form of his dream house on a plot of forested New Jersey hillside that he had inherited from an aunt. The alert and conditioned reader is already puzzled. "What?" he is asking himself, "Can a brand new house be haunted?" Ah, but you see, Walter Treichler had built his Fair Haven over the blackened ruins of an old home whose infamous history we shall unravel as our narrative progresses.

On January 7, 1929, Treichler spent his first day at Fair Haven unpacking his books and curios. Then, after stepping outside to check the wintry night for evidence of snow clouds, he bolted the door and lay down on his new bed.

Tired as he was from the labors of the moving day, Treichler's drowsiness could not shut out the sounds of someone digging outside in his front yard. As the impact of that thought struck him, he sat bolt upright in his bed. Who could be spading *his* yard in the dead of a New Jersey winter?

As he walked to the window with flashlight in hand, he could hear the familiar crunch of blade against earth, the thudding of freshly dug soil as it was tossed over a shoulder. Treichler shone the flashlight out of the window. His eyes told him that there was nobody there, but his ears insisted that somebody was digging up his yard.

Reluctantly, but resolutely, he pushed his feet into slippers, shrugged on an overcoat, and walked to the front door.

An icy shiver of fear suddenly permeated his frame. The front door stood slightly ajar. Treichler could distinctly remember bolting it securely only moments before he went to bed.

He pushed the door open wide and swung the strong beam of the flashlight into the darkness. A light blanket of fresh snow lay unbroken before him. There was no one digging in his front yard. And there was no hole or spaded

earth to bear mute testimony to the mysterious digger's labor. Not a single footprint marred the smooth surface of the snow.

The old seaman made a complete circuit of the house before he had satisfied himself that no one had violated the sanctity of his Fair Haven. He stood in the doorway scratching his head. "What in blazes did I hear?" he said aloud into the night.

As if in answer to his query, the confused patter of two pairs of feet—one heavy, one lighter—came from the attic.

Had someone crept into his house while he had explored his lawn?

Without hesitation, Treichler rushed up the stairs and unlocked the attic door. "Who's in here?" he demanded.

The sound of footsteps stopped at once. Treichler swept the attic with his flashlight. There was absolutely no one there. Could he have heard but the scrape and rustle of pine branches against the roof?

Confused, Treichler walked back down the stairs to his bedroom. He supposed that he would have to become conditioned to certain night noises in the country, but this was ridiculous. He reached over to shut out his bedlamp as he slid once more beneath the covers.

Thud!

Something so heavy fell to the floor beside his bed that the impact sent a mirror crashing off the wall.

"Who's there?" Treichler managed to gasp.

From the blackness came a barely audible whisper. The words were unintelligible, but they seemed to carry a tone of menace.

The old seaman's groping fingers found the cord to his bedlamp, and for the first time, he felt real fear. He was completely alone. The room was empty.

All through that first nightmarish night, Treichler lay wide-eyed and sleepless in his new bedroom. As long as he kept the lights on, Fair Haven was at peace. The moment he allowed darkness to reclaim the night, the cottage was filled with a incredible cacophony of eerie noises.

Just outside his window, some relentless gravedigger spaded the cold earth. A strange duo of heavy and light footsteps tramped about his attic. The front door unbolted

itself with the same persistence with which he bolted it. Eerie, unintelligible whispers sounded beside his ear.

At last Treichler made himself a pot of coffee, turned on every light in his new house, and sat up until dawn.

That next day he went into Mount Holly and bought an arsenal of three revolvers and a double-barrelled shotgun. The tough old man decided that bootleggers had a still in the forest and were trying to scare him away with some spooky tricks so they could ply their illegal trade in solitude.

After he had equipped himself with heavy firepower, Treichler stopped by the locksmith's to give the man a tongue-lashing for installing faulty locks on the doors at Fair Haven.

"There's nothing wrong with those locks," the locksmith said in his defense. "You've built your house on cursed ground. No one has been able to live at Buctoo for long."

Treichler left the shop snorting derisively. He had no patience with local superstitions. As he drove back to Fair Haven, he lifted a hand off the steering wheel to stroke the long barrels of the shotgun. A good blast of shot would be the right prescription to cure mysterious sounds in the night.

For the next week, Walter Treichler slept by day and sat up all night, determined to catch the troublemakers in the act. He found no one, however, and he could never discover any tracks other than his own marring the surface of the snow. Yet if he shut out the lights for even a moment, the doors mysteriously unbolted themselves and swung open, footsteps scampered about in the attic, and the phantom gravedigger began spading earth.

The old seaman grew pale and rundown, but he would not surrender to his unseen antagonists. Someone was trying to run him out of his precious Fair Haven and he was not going to scare.

In spite of the overwhelming evidence of something other than a human agency at work in his home, Treichler did not for a moment consider that Fair Haven might be pervaded by paranormal phenomena. The word "ghost" simply was not in his vocabulary.

Walter Treichler finally turned for help to Ellis B. Parker, Chief of Detectives of Burlington County, New

Jersey. Parker was a well-known detective who later entered into the famous Lindbergh kidnapping case. Parker was a shrewd man who knew the people, places, and traditions of his territory. It was from Chief of Detectives Parker that Treichler learned the infamous history of Buctoo.

"Where your house now stands, Mr. Treichler," Parker began, "there once was a tavern named the Little Brown Jug. It had served as one of the depots in the Underground Railway during the violent days immediately preceding the Civil War.

"An escaping Negro, a giant of a man, sought sanctuary there one night, but officers were in close pursuit of him and they quickly closed in on their fugitive slave. The big man put up a fierce fight. He used fists, feet, and teeth, and then, accidentally so the officers claimed, an old horse pistol went off and the slave fell to the floor, spitting blood and cursing the men with his dying breath.

"Instead of a runaway slave worth a thousand dollar reward, the officers now had a corpse that could only bring them trouble. No authority would suggest murder in the case of a slave, but the slave's owner would certainly demand damages. The frightened officers scooped a crude grave in the cellar, swore the household to secrecy under pain of fearful reprisal, then galloped away. The giant Negro's name had been Timbuctoo, 'Buctoo."

"Are you trying to tell me that my Fair Haven was built on dark and bloody ground with some weird old curse on it?" Treichler asked incredulously.

The Chief of Detectives smiled, shrugged noncommittally, then went on to tell how the tavern had passed into the hands of Treichler's aunt and uncle. Shortly after the death of Uncle Cyrus, Aunt Harriet had disappeared without a trace, and local gossips whispered that there were two mounds in the cellar.

"When did the Little Brown Jug burn?" Treichler asked the detective. "There were only ashes and charred ruins when I began building."

"The place has been built up twice since the original Little Brown Jug burned down," Parker said. "Each time it has been destroyed by fire.

"Last year a gang of Philadelphia hoods holed up in there before it burned. We didn't even know they were there until they pulled out one night leaving behind their

clothes, revolvers, packets of heroin, and a machine gun. It appears that something must have scared them so badly that they left in an awfully big hurry."

Treichler grunted a hoarse little laugh. "Well, whatever scared them off, I don't believe it had anything to do with ghosts and a dying slave's hex."

"Maybe not," Parker smiled. "Okay, I'll tell you what. I'll send a couple of my best men out to spend the night with you. I hope that we can get to the bottom of all this. I'm getting as curious as you are irritated with these mysterious disturbances."

Somehow word leaked out that a ghost hunt was in progress at Fair Haven and the disgruntled Treichler ended up hosting Arthur Corbine and Clifford Kane, plainclothes detectives, who shared his prowler theory; John Cohen, an erstwhile psychic investigator, who had never been able to corner a ghost; two local tealeaf readers, who claimed psychic gifts; three friends, who were curious; four newspaper reporters, who smelled a good Sunday supplement story; and Emil Luquet, who was a medium of some genuine ability.

Late that night, all the lights in the house were turned out except for one small oil lamp. The twelve "ghost hunters" sat back to await visitants from the Other Side. Shortly after midnight, the medium Luquet sighed wearily: "We can do nothing here tonight. The spirits are silent."

Crash! Thud! Bang!

As if to mock Luquet's pronouncement, the phenomena at Fair Haven began in eerie earnest.

The psychic investigator and the police ran up stairs to investigate the empty attic with the scampering feet.

The reporters tried to catch the free-swinging doors in the act of unbolting.

The medium and the tealeaf readers attempted to communicate with the far-away whispers that seemed to babble from a dozen corners of the cottage.

By morning, Treichler and the assorted spook chasers, policemen, and reporters were exhausted. "We're all game to try it again tonight," Luquet spoke up.

But Treichler flatly refused. He would combat his unseen and uninvited guests all by himself. He was not going to put up with the eleven of them trooping upstairs and

downstairs and indoors and outdoors another night. The well-intentioned group left reluctantly and wished the old seaman good luck.

For six more months Walter Treichler did nightly battle with the phantom grave digger, eternally damned to bury 'Buctoo's remains; the heavy and lighter footsteps in the attic, probably 'Buctoo and his woman scurrying for safety from the pursuing officers; and all the whispers, slamming, and banging which goodness only knew what had set them in motion. Then, one summer night, Fair Haven burned to the ground, the fourth house to serve as a funeral pyre for the giant slave who had died with a terrible curse on his lips.

THE WITCH WHO HEXED ANDREW JACKSON

Andrew Jackson burst into the pages of American history as a young man who talked back to a British officer and received a saber cut across the forehead for his pains. He became a deadly duelist, a great lover, an accomplished military man, and a President of the United States for eight years. In all of his adventures, no man could ever have stepped forward and said with any truth in his speech that Andrew Jackson was afraid of man or beast. He, himself, however, told of the time that he met his match in an attempt to "lay" the famous Bell witch.

The phenomena which beset the farm of John Bell of Robertson County, Tennessee, about 1817 has become the most famous haunting in the annals of American psychical research. "Kate the Witch" was never seen, but she was heard and felt. She pummeled servants, killed pets, stuck pins in people, slapped the faces of women, threw pebbles at schoolboys, and wrestled powerful men to the ground. The Witch's principal purpose, for what reason no one could determine, seemed to be to prevent the marriage of Betsy Bell to Josh Gardiner. Because of this strange mission, Betsy bore the brunt of the vicious attacks; but strangely enough, the cruelest blows were reserved for her father, John Bell.

John Bell was a good friend of Andrew Jackson and his wife, Rebecca, and it may have been at Rebecca's urging that the tough old Indian fighter and hero of the Battle of New Orleans decided to try his hand at "laying" witches. The phenomena on the Bell farm had been in progress for an incredible four years when "Old Hickory" set out for Robertson County with several servants and a professional "witch layer."

Jackson's party was not far from the Bell farm when the wheels of the coach suddenly became fixed and immovable. The brake was not on, the driver grumbled, and lash-

ing the horses did no good. Jackson ordered all the men to set their shoulders to the wheels, but their combined strength could not budge them. When the wheels were slid off, they were found to revolve easily on their axles.

General Jackson puffed thoughtfully on his pipe. "What were we talking about just before those wheels stopped turning?" he asked one of his men.

"Why, sir," the man replied, "we were laughing and listening to the witch-layer boast of how he would fix the Bell Witch."

"Aye," General Jackson nodded his head. "Could it be that someone overheard these fancy boasts?"

Upon those words, a shrill cackle sounded from the bushes beside the road. "Right you are, General. Now I'll let the wagon move on. Farewell, I'll see you tonight!"

Jackson's men quickly rushed the bushes, but they could find no sign of any woman. Several of the men were expert trackers, but they found nary a trace that any human had set foot in those bushes from which they had all heard the voice issue.

"By thunder, boys," Jackson laughed. "It appears the Witch moves easier than an Indian!"

John Bell welcomed his famous old friend, and after a hearty meal and several pipefuls smoked together, Andrew Jackson, the witch-layer, and a few of the General's men sat in a room with a tallow candle to wait for the Witch.

"Do you fear the hag?" Jackson asked the burly witch-layer.

"I fear nothing!" the big man grunted, patting a huge pistol. "I've loaded this with a silver ball that'll stop any beast-servant of Satan."

There was a strange noise, like someone dancing barefooted on the floor, then the room echoed with the same eerie, metallic voice that they had heard before when the Witch had hexed the wagon wheels. "I'm here, General," Witch Kate announced herself. "What do you have planned for the evening."

"I'm here to try to persuade you to allow Betsy to marry this Josh she has her heart so set on," Jackson said around the stem of his pipe.

"I shall never allow Betsy to marry Josh Gardiner!" the Witch snapped. "You've come on a fool's errand. And now," she said, addressing herself to the witch-layer, "I

hear that you've a hankering to shoot me. Well, go right on ahead!"

"Caint shoot somethin' I caint see," the man complained.

"I'm right here in this corner," the Witch mocked him. "Fire away!"

For a moment, there did seem to be a shimmering image illuminating the darkness of a corner of the room. The witch-layer took aim, pulled the trigger, but the flint clicked solid without striking sparks. Flustered, the brawny man recocked his pistol, pulled the trigger, but the weapon once again failed to fire.

"Now it's my turn!" the Witch screeched. "I'm going to scratch your eyes out!"

The witch-layer let out a terrible howl of fear, knocked over a bench getting to the door, and ran out of sight into the darkness. Old Hickory collapsed to the floor with laughter. "I knew I had that fellow pegged for a coward," he told his men between loud guffaws of mirth.

Jackson would have liked to have stayed a week observing the remarkable phenomena on the Bell farm, but he quickly assessed that whatever was in play there was beyond his ken and outside his expertise as a military man. Any invisible, cackling witch that could creep up on a party of woodsmen and hex a coach's wheels so they would not move was a more formidable foe than a line of British redcoats with their muskets at the ready.

DEATH CURSE OF THE AFRICAN WITCHDOCTOR

This case comes from the extensive files of author Brad Steiger. It was recorded by him directly from the testimony of one of the principals, a lovely young woman from Uganda, who was attending college in the United States.

The young woman, whom Steiger calls "Beatrice," told the author that she had encountered so much magic in her home village that it had become a part of her life style. To her, magic was ever present—alive, invigorating, but sometimes deadly.

Some years ago, Beatrice's father had suffered a long period of illness, which neither the white doctors nor the native medicine men could diagnose. Her father had always been a strong, proud, industrious man who had worked long and hard to acquire his wealth. It would seem only natural that such a man should provoke jealousy among the lethargic and gain enemies among those who felt they had been bested by his business acumen. And as if it were not enough that Beatrice's father had amassed considerable wealth through his own industry, he had also sired eight daughters, whose prospective husbands would assure him of even more material possessions.

Although the prosperous merchant and land owner had acquired a number of business rivals, it seemed that it was Saja who had become envious enough to seek his life.

Saja was a weak little man who was Beatrice's father's principal competitor in the region. Since Saja did not doubt for a moment that he was too weak to best his rival physically and too slow-witted to best him financially, he had sought the services of the most powerful medicine man in the area, and he had paid the man well to cast a dreadful curse upon his prosperous competitor.

The magician's curse had proven to be extremely effective. Although Beatrice's father had been strong enough to resist succumbing to death, he had waged an unending

siege against the mysterious disease for nearly six years. At last he was able to discover a witchdoctor whose talents surpassed those of the black magician who had set the hex upon him and he was cured.

"Saja swore and ranted like a mad man," Beatrice told Steiger. "He had been cheated of his victory. Father only laughed at him or ignored him whenever they met in the marketplace. It is to my father's credit that not once, throughout all of his afflictions, did I ever hear him curse Saja or vow revenge on the evil little toad.

"One of the most ironic things about the whole business," Beatrice went on, "was that Saja's nephew and only male heir, Amisi, was my brother's best friend. I was a bit skeptical of Amisi's friendship, however. I often felt that he had ingratiated himself to my family only because he was well aware that someday he and my brother would be the central figures in the village. I think his opportunistic mind visualized a coalition between the two powerful families.

"I say this because Amisi was a greedy person. In fact, I would have to say that greed was his basic character trait. Often he would bring baskets of fruit as gifts to our family, then, during the course of his evening's visit, he would proceed to eat every piece of fruit himself!"

Saja, of course, was not content to satisfy himself with one attempt on the life of his competitor. He traveled far to bring a witchdoctor back with him whose reputation for conjuring death-dealing curses was feared throughout Uganda.

"The ordeal reached its climax one stormy night," Beatrice remembered, "a night made for Black Magic, a night of thunder, wind, and lightning.

"Father had been gone for several days on a long trip. As we sat inside our home, we could hear chanting without.

" 'This time I have him!' Saja's cackle rose above the noise of the storm. 'This time my prosperous enemy shall die!'

"A villager scoffed at Saja and told him that if he failed this time, he could not be considered a man.

" 'I shall not fail!' Saja screamed. 'No man can match my magician's powers!'

"With shocked and incredulous eyes," Beatrice told

Steiger, "we watched the ceremony that was taking place before our home—a ceremony designed to kill our father!

"Completely oblivious to the terrible storm, Saja and his fearsome magician went about performing the rites necessary to bring about Father's destruction. A young goat was led into the magic circle by one of Saja's servants. The witchdoctor lifted his grotesque countenance into the night rain, his thick lips mouthing curses, his devilish eyes seeming to burn beneath his protruding forehead.

" 'There can be no escape!' the witchdoctor shrilled into the howling wind. 'He shall die in disgrace away from his home and the curse will remain upon his family forever!' "

The lovely young woman could not repress a shudder as she recalled the incident for author Steiger. "I will never forget the way he looked at us when he pronounced those words," she said. "Amisi stood on the other side of the fence with his uncle, and his expression seemed to plead with us to understand that he was helpless to come to our aid."

Beatrice remembers screaming when the witchdoctor slit the throat of the young goat. "Everyone knew that as soon as the goat was killed in sacrifice, something horrible would happen to my father."

As the dying goat lay kicking spasmodically, the blood spurting from its throat, the witchdoctor commanded Saja to begin jumping barefooted in the spilled blood. After the hateful merchant had completed his part in the ritual, each member of Saja's family was made to perform the same grisly mechanics of the blood curse.

After each member of Saja's line had completed his part in the black rites, the witchdoctor made a final pronouncement: "This ceremony will bring death to your enemy. No one is to touch this meat. If any of you do so, the curse will be yours!"

"My family and I huddled together in terror," Beatrice said. "We were stifled by grief and horror. The terrible ceremony had begun at five o'clock; it was six o'clock when the ugly magician had completed the black rites. Father, if he were unharmed, should have been arriving at any moment.

"Then it was seven o'clock. Soon eight. In terror our entire family watched the inexorable movement of the

hands of the clock. Midnight passed, but still we kept our silent, sorrowful vigil.

"It was 12:45 when we heard the familiar sputtering of the family car. Of the men who had accompanied Father on the business trip, he alone knew how to drive an automobile. That meant Father was still alive!

"Father and his companions were in a terrible mess," Beatrice told Steiger. "They were covered with mud and were totally exhausted, but, most importantly, they were alive!

"Father barely managed to talk as we surrounded him, hugging and kissing him. Finally he explained that he was so late because he had suddenly lost control of the car and had gone into the ditch. It had taken the men several hours to push the automobile out of the ditch in the rain and the mud with nothing but their physical strength."

Beatrice asked her father what time the accident had occurred. He shrugged, frowned, then snapped his fingers. "It was exactly six o'clock. I remember looking at my watch."

Six o'clock—the exact moment that the black magician had slit the throat of the struggling young goat in order to bring about the businessman's death. What had prevented the curse from completing its grim mission? How had Beatrice's father survived the awful power of the death hex?

Beatrice supplied a curious Brad Steiger with the answer: "They found Saja's nephew Amisi the next morning quite dead. In his mouth was a piece of goat meat. Amisi's insatiable appetite had led him to violate the witchdoctor's admonition not to partake of the goat's flesh. Amisi's greed had transferred the black magician's curse from my father to him."

THE PROFESSOR WHO STOLE SOULS

The curious case about to be related will be appealed in Italian courts in 1970 and intellectuals in Rome are attempting to muster evidence which will reverse the conviction of Professor Aldo Braibanti, who, in July, 1968, was sentenced to nine years in prison for *plagio,* soul-stealing.

Article 603 of the Italian Penal Code is the only one of its kind in the world. *Plagio* might possibly be better translated into English as "brain-washing" or "complete domination of the will of another," but in Italy, Professor Braibanti is known as the Stealer of Souls.

In 1958, Professor Braibanti, a man respected in literary, theatrical, and intellectual circles, rented an old tower near Perugia in northern Italy, declared it a center for budding writers and artists, and christened it, the "Tower of All Talents."

Shortly after the idealistic center had been opened, a sixteen-year-old electrician named Pier Carlo arrived to do some electrical work. Pier Carlo was overwhelmed by Braibanti's intellect and impressed by his rooms of books, paintings, costumes, puppet theatres, and the hundreds of glass encased ant mazes which showed the insects in their nest-colonies. Professor Braibanti maintained that human society could learn many valuable lessons from the ants, humble insects that had achieved a perfectly organized societal structure.

Pier Carlo met the many painters, poets, musicians, and writers who gravitated around the professor, and he felt himself coming under Braibanti's mental control.

"He insisted that my mind belonged completely to him," Pier Carlo later testified. "He demanded that my mind be emptied of all previous thoughts. He wanted all past ideas to be totally replaced by the new things he told me."

According to Pier Carlo, Braibanti made him swear an

oath that he would never leave him and insisted that he sign it in his own blood.

The blood-inked oath forced Pier Carlo to sever all relationships with his family and made him accompany Professor Braibanti wherever he went. Pier Carlo was not to read newspapers, listen to the radio, or watch television. When he went out on the street, he was to walk with his head bowed so that his eyes would never meet anyone else's eyes. If someone spoke to him, Pier Carlo was to remain silent and permit the professor to speak for him. The teenager was denied the privilege of shaking anyone's hand or to touch another human being in any way.

"Once when we were riding an escalator," Pier Carlo told officials, "Professor Braibanti became furious because I rested my hand on the rail. He said that I was not allowed to do that because other people had held the rail and he was afraid that I might somehow experience a communication with others who had touched the rail, thereby robbing him of a part of my personality, which he insisted belonged exclusively to him."

Pier Carlo did as he was told. After several months of such mental domination, he had no will power remaining that would permit him to think for himself.

Then, one fall night in 1960, Professor Braibanti sent Pier Carlo on a rare errand all by himself. As he walked the streets with his head down like some unthinking automaton, the sound of church bells tolling midnight Mass suddenly triggered a long dormant response in Pier Carlo's unconscious.

"The bells awakened me as if I had been in a dream," Pier Carlo later told the court. "I ran through the streets until I came to the home of my brother Franco. I pounded on the door until he opened it, then I fell into his arms and begged him to save me."

Franco warned Professor Braibanti to stay away from his brother, and the intellectual readily complied. By this time he had eighteen-year-old Giovanni Sanfratello under what the prosecution termed "his evil spell."

Agostino, Giovanni's older brother, testified that Braibanti had tried the same intellectual process of total isolation from all other stimuli that he had worked upon Pier Carlo, but that Agostino had seen through the professor's tactics.

"Even though I could see what he was doing to us," Agostino said, "I could feel myself slowly being controlled against my will. In order to escape from his spell, I volunteered to do my military service early. Once I was separated from him by distance, I was able to see Braibanti and his philosophy in a much better perspective."

Giovanni, however, became completely mesmerized by the teachings of the Stealer of Souls. In 1964, Agostino and the other male members of the Sanfratello family took Giovanni away from the professor by force, several burly men holding Braibanti face down on a bed so that he could neither speak to nor gaze upon the entranced Giovanni.

The senior Sanfratello complained to authorities: "This man took away my son and left me nothing."

Agostino said that even after a four year separation from Professor Braibanti his brother was still slightly under his domination. "Giovanni fought against our bringing charges against the professor. Now he says that Braibanti is mentally ill and should be pitied. Perhaps he is right, but such things should not be allowed to remain unchecked."

In his defense, Professor Braibanti said that the very fact that the two young men, now ages twenty-eight and twenty-six, were bringing charges against him proved that he had not stolen their minds or robbed them of their souls.

Although the charges against Braibanti were filed in 1964, the professor was not brought to trial until 1968. The prosecution realized that this case would be the law's first test and they decided to proceed with caution. Professor Braibanti was sentenced to nine years in prison for "soul-stealing" on July 14, 1968. Even as this is being written (spring, 1970), the Italian intellectual community is rallying to fight the earlier conviction.

A FAMILY DESTROYED BY RUMORS OF HEXES AND SPELLS

Can some men and women unconsciously practice the power of hexing, or can malicious gossip become one of the most terrible and effective of all curses?

Four years ago, cafe owner Abel Fauconnier, his wife, and their four children were respected members of the French community in which they lived. Today, because of rumors that Abel and his wife Irene are witches, the Fauconniers are penniless and friendless.

The witchcraft hysteria began in January, 1966, when a farmer had a cow die under circumstances which the local veterinarian could not diagnose. The loss of a cow is a tragedy not to be taken lightly in a poor village. Then, as if they were victims of some invisible sniper, the same farmer lost twelve pigs and four more cows for equally mysterious reasons.

Man is so constructed that he must always seek reasons for his misfortunes. Old superstitions began to be resurrected from their psychological tombs. Marie Masse, a woman respected in that area of France for her clairvoyant abilities, was consulted by the desperate farmer.

Marie Masse spread a map of the village before her, and her divining stick dipped at the spot on the map which indicated the inn of Abel Fauconnier.

"Abel and Irene are witches," she decreed with terrible finality. "They have made a pact with the Devil. Abel and Irene have killed your livestock."

Such omnious words traveled fast in the small village of 600. Soon every misfortune from spilled milk to flat tires was being blamed on the unsuspecting Fauconniers. A hearse on its way to the cemetery stalled in front of Abel's inn—sure proof of his witchery. Fauconnier inquired about a farmer's new milk machine shortly before it broke down—absolute proof of his hex power.

When the stories finally got back to Abel Fauconnier, he had a good, hearty laugh. But when life-long customers ceased to frequent the inn, Abel ceased laughing. His four children were scorned. His wife was shunned. He was forced to close the inn and seek work as a copper-smith in a nearby village.

Although he was born in the village of La Tardiere and had lived there all of his thirty-nine years, Fauconnier has been forced to commute for the past three years. The priest, and mayor, and other prominent citizens shrug their shoulders and declare it all an unfortunate affair, but none of them do anything to rectify the situation.

And there are villagers who insist that the Fauconniers, for all their show of innocence, are merely regretting their crimes now that they have been found out. Numerous farmers recall stopping by the inn, chatting with Abel, then, before they left, he would ask about certain of their livestock. Within a day or two, they testify, that animal would be dead. Coincidence or deliberate sacrifice to the Devil?

In the opinion of one rather learned member of the community, the Fauconniers may not be actual practicing witches, but ". . . they may be working a kind of unconscious black magic against the villagers. There have been many strange happenings in this village that can apparently be traced directly back to the Fauconniers. It would seem best that they move out of La Tardiere and attempt to begin life anew elsewhere."

THE BUDDHA'S CURSE

In the July, 1966, issue of *Fate* magazine, Lavinia Bradley wrote of the strange permeation of evil that seemed to lurk near the Old Windsor lock on the River Thames when she was a child.

According to tradition, a fellow named Eric Thompson had enlisted as a soldier and had seen service in the East. He returned to England the proud owner of a lovely alabaster statue of the Buddha. Every one had their own theory as to how Thompson had gained possession of the beautiful artifact, since it is well known that Eastern temples neither sell nor give away their idols. The consensus in the neighborhood was that Thompson had stolen the Buddha.

Thompson's pride in his exotic possession began turning to despair when one domestic disaster followed another. His immediate family members went through a miserable siege of unemployment, illness, accident, even death. The neighbors advised Thompson that tampering with "heathen idols" boded no good and suggested that he dispose of the statue.

Thompson took the statue to an antique dealer named Hoy, whose shop stood on King's Road. Hoy was unfamiliar with the black cloud above the alabaster Buddha, and he eagerly purchased the beautiful artifact. Within a few days, his child was hurt in a playground accident, his wife fell down the stairs, and a fire broke out in his warehouse. At the same time, the Thompson family fortunes took an immediate turn for the better.

By now the tale of the Buddha's curse had become common currency in the area, and Hoy found it impossible to sell the statue to an unwary antique dealer. In desperation, and convinced of the potency of the curse, Hoy threw the object in the Thames.

Lavinia Bradley remembers that, to her child's eye, the Buddha seemed to cast an eerie spell over the waters near

Old Windsor lock. "We played our games further upstream," she writes.

The submerged Buddha might have hexed only the fish forever, if, in the summer of 1955, the old lock had not needed some repairs. The local newspaper's headlines announced: "Work of Art Dredged from the Thames—Workmen Find Priceless Buddha."

The old-timers knew it was the cursed Buddha, but John Thorpe, the young workman who had discovered the statue, laughed and made sport of such superstitious prattle. Thorpe had recently married and needed money. He decided the beautiful thing would be worth a packet of money to some art or antique dealer.

Thorpe buckled the Buddha onto his motorcycle and set out at an easy pace on an entirely straight and smooth stretch of road. For no apparent reason, the motorcycle skidded and Thorpe landed in the hospital, severely injured.

The Buddha did not receive a scratch from the mysterious slide that totally demolished Thorpe's motorcycle, and some conscientious individual saw to it that the statue was delivered to Thorpe's home. Within a matter of hours, Mrs. Thorpe suffered a miscarriage, due, some people said, to the shock of her husband's accident. Or was it yet another manifestation of the curse?

For days Thorpe lay in the hospital, screaming in delirium that the Buddha was pursuing him, tormenting him. At last he begged his friends to throw the statue back into the Thames.

Lavinia Bradley watched the men once again commit the alabaster Buddha to the murky waters of the Thames.

"In the evenings the dark waters at the head of the lock are as eerie as ever they were when I was a child," she concludes. "Underneath them the Buddha still lies."

HOW TO MAKE A PROTECTIVE TALISMAN

The practice of wearing a talisman about the neck in order that certain supernatural powers or benefits might come to the owner goes back to the earliest glimmerings of man's prehistory. Certain readers may be interested in learning how they might make a talisman which would be at once individualistic and be representative of alleged transcendent powers. In order to gain such information, this author quizzed a young, but quite accomplished, occultist in Detroit, whom we shall call Nero.

Nero, can you guarantee that a talisman will work for everyone?

No, of course not. A talisman may only work on, let's say, one out of five people. It works best on that special type of person who has great psychic sensitivity.

What can a talisman do?

A well prepared talisman can help protect a sensitive person from absorbing negative influences from his environment. And one never knows when someone may have deliberately set some hostile forces at work against one.

In my opinion, the best talismans are those which have been made according to the precepts of African Fetishism.

African masters—call them witchdoctors if you must—believe that talismans can be used to protect one against possessing spirits or hexes. A good talisman can absorb and neutralize many of the negative influences and bad vibrations which may suddenly surround you.

How would I know which kind of talisman would be best for me?

The most important thing to remember is that you must never wear a talisman that has been made of iron. Iron literally sucks up negative vibrations in the environment. Iron absorbs coarse attributes from anyone who comes into contact with it.

A talisman with gold in it is the best. Gold attracts the better qualities of the environment and of anyone who may have come into previous contact with the metal.

The ideal talisman would be one that had some gold in it and contained ingredients from the plant, animal, sea, and mineral kingdoms.

For example, you could saw off the tip of a cow's horn, which would in itself be animal, than drop inside the horn an insect's wing, some fish scales, a bit of gold, and maybe a bird's feather. That would make an excellent talisman! Just plug the end after you've threaded a leather thong through it, and put it around your neck.

Then I would have good luck?

You might. A well-balanced person makes his own luck, but he makes it much better and faster if he lives in a harmonious psychic environment. A proper talisman might harmonize, or stabilize, your unconscious mind and make you better able to control your environment. Such an unconscious, psychic accomplishment would guard your conscious mind from fear and would certainly make you feel more confident about facing the world.

If I should wish to make a talisman, then, I can find everything I need on a pleasant nature walk.

Exactly. Pluck a leaf from a tree to symbolize the air. Pick up a seashell to represent sea. There's a bit of rabbit fur on that bush over there. And my, look at that interesting rock. Put the leaf, the seashell, the fur, the pretty rock in a leather bag or a hollowed horn to wear about your neck, and you would have a talisman with the plant, animal, mineral, and sea kingdoms represented.

I have found that the teeth of animals, butterfly wings, roots, seeds, and sulphur make very special ingredients in good talismans.

Tin, copper, silver, gold are excellent metals, but remember—no iron!

Are there any particular rituals which I should observe while fashioning my talisman?

Well, no, not really. It is most important, though, that you concentrate totally upon the talisman which you are shaping. To allow your mind to wander would be to assure an ineffectual talisman. A dud, so to speak.

I have seen some great magicians fashion a talisman while in a trance state. This is impractical for the novice

and quite dangerous, as the neophyte occultist should never toy around with the trance state.

Rather than trance, I would say that the shaper of the talisman should be in an inspired state. He should wait for a quiet time when he will not be interrupted, and he should approach the task at hand in an inspirational, reverential attitude.

The objects in the talisman should be placed so that they can vibrate with the sound of the wearer's heartbeat. The power contained in the talisman is cyclical, flowing out of the flesh of the wearer, into the talisman, and back to the flesh again. The talisman becomes a living thing with a consciousness of its own. It comes to absorb some of the soul of the wearer and should not lightly be exchanged.

From your description, it seems that a talisman should be worn over the heart.

Oh, absolutely. We must make that perfectly clear. In order to function properly, the talisman must be worn near the heart over the solar plexus just below the chest.

Should it be worn day and night?

Well, I certainly never take my talisman off my body. I find that at night my talisman assures a good sleep because it protects me from having bad dreams.

Since the talisman's essential function is to serve as a neutralizing influence and an aid in stabilizing one's environment, I should think that anyone who finds those functions important to him would never remove his talisman, except, of course, to prevent the ingredients from becoming damaged or wet in certain instances. For example, it would be imprudent to wear one's talisman into the tub and sit and soak for hours if the talisman should be made of a leather bag.

Are talismans as necessary today as they were in more primitive times?

In my opinion, they are even more necessary! In addition to hostile vibrations and negative impulses from certain individuals who walk the Left Hand Path of Evil, today we have vibrations and impulses from television, radio, transistors, automobiles, factories, jet airplanes, and a dozen and one other things to mess up our environment and disturb the quietude so cherished by the psyche.

ARAB CURSE THAT GUARDS A TWO MILLION DOLLAR TREASURE

Ahmed Musaq had terrorized European merchant vessels with his vicious pirate raids for several years. He had looted and slaughtered and ravaged, until, at last, the Italian city states of Venice and Genoa hired a warfleet of mercenaries to smash his stronghold at the port of Tripoli.

The invading soldiers found Ahmed Musaq in his storeroom surrounded by trunks and trunks of mind-boggling booty. Ahmed Musaq knew that death by slow torture would be his lot if he were captured alive. Pulling a deadly stiletto from his sash, he faced his attackers with grim mockery in his dark eyes.

"The treasure is beautiful, is it not?" he smiled, indicating the glittering mounds of wealth with a broad sweep of his arm. "But none of you shall ever possess it! It is mine! Mine for all eternity. Whoever tries to take this treasure from me, shall have to deal with my vengeful soul coming for him from the dark chambers of death!"

With the fearful malediction uttered, Ahmed Musaq held the stiletto against a wall and surged against it with his chest. The mercenaries held back for a moment as the pirate chieftain bucked violently in his death throes. Then they dashed for the treasure and tried to make off with as many coins and jewels as possible before their leaders claimed the booty for themselves.

The mercenaries who invaded the treasure room could not have made off with more than a mere pittance before Admiral D'Alesio of Genoa swept into the stronghold and proclaimed his right to the accumulated booty as his payment for having led the invading forces to Tripoli. Two days later, D'Alesio's flagship, loaded with the fantastic treasure hoard, sailed from the harbor.

The ship was less than a third of the way across the Mediterranean, when Admiral D'Alesio began behaving strangely.

"He walks about the deck as if he is being pursued by some invisible foe," one of his officers said to a number of D'Alesio's lieutenants.

Another officer shook his head sadly. "Last night I came upon him flailing the air about him with his sword. 'Begone foul demon!' he shouted. 'Go back to the foul pits of Hell where you belong!' "

On the eighth day of the voyage, as he walked on deck, Admiral D'Alesio was suddenly flung over the rail into the sea, as if some violent wind had seized him. The ship's log noted that there was no wind, the seas were calm, and the ship was perfectly stable. The Admiral disappeared below the surface of the sea before a rescue boat could be lowered.

Common seamen, who had learned of the pirate chieftain's curse, said that the Arab's angry soul had returned from death to seek revenge on the possessor of his treasure. The city government of Genoa laughed at such tales and congratulated themselves on the acquisition of such wealth. City Counsellor Francesco Lionelli was appointed guardian of the booty.

Counsellor Lionelli equipped a warehouse as if it were a fortress and kept a contingent of guards on duty at all times. The Counsellor certainly fulfilled his commitment to protect the treasure, but he could do little to safeguard his own well being.

Three weeks after his appointment as guardian of Ahmed Musaq's treasure, Counsellor Lionelli was found hanging from a beam in his country estate. The suicide note he left behind told of his having been tormented by some dark thing that had demanded his death.

After Lionelli's death, four men were appointed treasurers by the city of Genoa and the pirate's loot fell under their jurisdiction. By now the tale of Ahmed Musaq's curse had become common legend, and one of the three men absolutely refused responsibility for the ill-gained and eerily-protected wealth. Within a month, the three treasurers had all committed suicide after each man had been reduced to a harried, raving individual, who jumped at shadows and spoke of ghostly pursuit. The man who had declined guardianship of the treasure lived in good health for another twenty-eight years.

Famine struck Genoa in 1769 and the city fathers were

forced to buy wheat and oil from a shipper in Benghazi, Libya. Ahmed Musaq's booty was loaded into a flagship to pay the shipper's exorbitant price.

Not far from Tripoli, Commander Vitti went suddenly mad and destroyed the ship by setting fire to its powder magazine. The flagship exploded and the pirate's treasure sank to the bottom along with the shattered vessel.

The few survivors of the disaster testified that their commander had screamed of a demon on board ship that must be destroyed. Before anyone could lift a hand to stop him, the officer had thrown a torch into the powder magazine.

Ahmed Musaq's treasure lay undisturbed for two centuries, so close to the pirate's old Tripolian stronghold that it seemed as though the curse must have been fulfilled.

In 1968, Swedish adventurer Sven Bornholm, utilizing the most modern of diving techniques, managed to bring up the cursed treasure from the bottom of the Gulf of Sidra, off the coast of Libya. Although the Swede scoffed at tales of an old pirate's curse on the booty, he lay crushed and dead two months after he had salvaged the loot from the ocean floor.

In the April, 1969, issue of *Beyond* magazine, Bornholm's wife, Ingrid, was quoted as saying that in his last days, Sven had become restless, unable to sleep, and subject to severe headaches.

"I would be talking to him and become aware that he was staring off into space, with a scared look in his eyes," Mrs. Bornholm said. "It was almost as if he was listening to something or someone I couldn't hear, and he was completely withdrawn from anything going on around him. . . ."

Mrs. Bornholm reported that her husband had once told her that he felt as if there were an unseen presence near him that was attempting to dominate him. "I try to shut it out of my mind, but I can't. It's inside me and it's taking over my will and my spirit."

Two days before the Bornholms were to leave for Paris, Sven began to scream that "it" wanted him and would not leave him alone. As if propelled by invisible hands, Bornholm began to move toward the stone parapet of the terrace. When Mrs. Bornholm tried to stop him, he turned suddenly and struck her viciously in the face.

Bornholm stood wavering on the edge of the parapet, as if he were mustering all of his strength to fight off some invisible aggressor. Then, "as if an invisible pair of arms had reached out and yanked him," Bornholm fell over the side to his death on the hard street below.

According to *Beyond,* Mrs. Bornholm ordered the cursed treasure to be transported to the ruins of an old mosque in an obscure village on the coast of Libya. Although she has refused to disclose the exact location to anyone, she has said that the booty now rests in the birthplace of the notorious Bey of Tripoli, Ahmed Musaq.

THE CURSED KNIFE THAT KILLED

Paul and Betty H—— of Topeka, Kansas, were great antique and auction buffs. It was during an auction in the late 1920's that Paul acquired the cursed knife.

"It was a deadly beauty," Betty H—— said to one of this author's correspondents not long ago. "The blade had been silver plated and the handle was ornately carved and embedded with semi-precious stones. The bidding for the knife had been very heated. There had been a rather Oriental-appearing gentleman who had wanted the knife in the worst way.

"As we were leaving the auction, the gentleman came up to Paul and asked him if he might buy the knife from him. Paul pointed out that the knife had just been sold in open bidding. If the man had wanted to buy the knife, he should have upped his bid.

" 'But I am short of funds at the present time,' the man said in a queer-sounding accent. 'Please, I beg of you. If you will let me have the knife today, I will promise to pay you double within a few months.' "

Betty H—— recalled that her husband declined the Oriental's offer. "If I should be generous enough to give you the knife, sir," Paul asked him, "what assurance do I have that I will ever see or hear from you again?"

The Oriental tried to persuade Paul that he would wire home for additional funds, and he begged him to accept a small deposit for the knife. "You see," he explained, "that knife is very special to my family. It can bring riches and blessings or misery and death, depending upon its possessor."

"Ah," Paul smiled. "A knife with an authentic curse. Now you cannot buy it at any price!"

The Oriental, sobered, told Paul H—— not to take such matters so lightly. Paul began to laugh and turned to walk

away from the frustrated collector, for that was how Paul had assessed the man.

"Some day I will come for the knife," the man called after them. "It is rightfully mine, and it is not meant for you to own it. It can bring you only death!"

"My husband refused to be bluffed by the man's threat, but he did consider the possibility that the Oriental might either attempt to break in our home and steal the knife or that he might hire a professional thief to do so. To guard against such an eventuality, Paul placed the knife in a strongbox along with some other valuable possessions and kept the key upon his person at all times."

Two years later, Betty H—— told my correspondent, her husband retired for bed one night, apparently in the best of health. "At about two A.M. I heard him gasp and felt him tremble. By the time I reached over to touch him, he was gone. Without any history of illness or any warning symptoms, my husband had suddenly died of a heart attack."

A few weeks later when she was discussing her husband's death with their family physician, the man remarked that Paul had died so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that it was as if someone had slashed his lifeline with a knife. The doctor's figure of speech made Betty shudder. For the first time in several months, she thought of the cursed knife in the strongbox.

"When I returned home, I went directly to the closet wherein Paul kept the box. Before I opened the lid, I somehow knew that the knife would be missing. A valuable antique pocket watch lay undisturbed, and so did a pearl necklace, a diamond stickpin, a diamond-studded money clip, and a number of other expensive antiques.

"It hardly seems reasonable that a thief, who, in some manner, had gained access to the strongbox, would steal a moderately valuable knife and pass up so many obviously valuable articles.

"Somehow I feel that it was no thief who made off with the cursed knife, but a certain gentleman with extraordinary abilities who reclaimed his precious knife and exacted revenge on a helpless man."

THE GYPSY CURSE THAT DESTROYED A TOWN

It was 1910 and a prosperous merchant from Valdez, Alaska, was visiting a not-so-prosperous colleague in the nearby mining town of Hazelton.

"Yep, Hank," he was telling his friend. "Some you win and some you lose. You sure lost when you decided to build your store in Hazelton instead of Valdez."

The merchant behind the counter shrugged. "What can I say? A mining town can either boom or bust. Hazelton busted."

"Well, it's not too late," the other businessman said, striking a wooden match and touching it to the end of a fresh cigar. "Tell you what. I'll make you a good deal and buy out your inventory."

"Ha! Your good deal would see me practically giving you my merchandise so you could sell it for top-dollar in Valdez!"

The prosperous merchant frowned, chewing on his cigar. "Hank, I'm giving you a chance to recoup at least some of your expenses. What are you going to gain here besides I.O.U.'s from a lot of broke miners? Hazelton will be a ghost town inside of four years."

Suddenly a woman's voice came to them from behind a dress rack. They had forgotten about the gypsy woman browsing in the store during their heated discussion.

"Don't be too proud, rich businessman," she warned. "One day there will be little left of Valdez and you will all look to Hazelton for haven."

The merchant from Valdez squinted over his cigar. "Oh, yeah, you're that gypsy witch we had to run out of Valdez last week along with your band of thieves."

"My people are not thieves," the woman said angrily, her dark eyes flashing. "But as for my being a witch. . . ."

"Witch!" the merchant snorted. "Hey, Hank, did you

know she put a curse on Valdez? Tell him about it, gypsy witch."

In a slow, measured voice, the gypsy repeated her malediction: "Some day the earth under Valdez will tremble and shake. Many houses will shatter and be washed into the sea. The houses left standing will be moved to Hazelton."

The Hazelton merchant began to laugh. "Hear that, Sam?" he asked the prosperous businessman from Valdez who had been needling him. "There's no need for me to move to Valdez and there's no need for you to try to buy out my inventory. It would all only end up back here in Hazelton!"

The years passed. The people of Hazelton allowed the gypsy and her people to live in their town unharassed, and the woman came to identify with the poor miners. Valdez continued to prosper while Hazelton became more and more a ghost town.

"It will not always be so," the gypsy said, shaking her fist toward Valdez and repeating her curse. "The earth will tremble beneath Valdez, and many houses will slide into the sea. Those who remain will move to Hazelton and desert Valdez."

In the great Alaskan earthquake of March 27, 1964, Valdez was the hardest hit of any city. Thirty-two persons were killed, eighty-five percent of the town was demolished, and many buildings and homes were swept into the sea. By the end of the year, the City Council of Valdez announced plans to move the remnant of their city to a new location four miles away.

Valdez would be resurrected on the spot where an old mining town named Hazelton once stood.

MUMMY'S CURSE THAT BROUGHT FLAMES AND DEATH

When the fire broke out in the British Museum some years ago, alert staff members were able to extinguish the flames before a great deal of damage had been done. In fact, the only artifact that had been destroyed was the ominous Egyptian mummy known only as "Number 12," and a good many individuals set the blame for the fire on that same mummy of an unidentified high priest.

Mummy Number 12 had quite a grisly scorecard in terms of the number of people who had received an evil curse for simply touching the remains or trying to photograph them.

The man who first acquired the mummified remains of the ancient high priest was mysteriously murdered. The second owner died in a shipwreck. The third possessor shocked his friends by suddenly committing suicide. The fourth individual who came into possession of the vindictive mummy was horribly burned to death.

When the fifth owner heard of the mummy's past history of evil dispensation, he decided to become a donor to the British Museum's Egyptology collection. On its way to the museum, the automobile transporting the deadly corpse became involved in a serious accident.

The mummy's legend had preceded itself to the museum, and a reporter, sniffing a good human interest story, puffed his way over to watch the unveiling of the newly-christened Mummy Number 12.

"So that's the old boy who's been croaking his owners, eh?" he chortled around a fat cigar. "He doesn't look so fierce to me. Maybe this is one high priest whose magic has all fizzled out on him, eh?"

The curators ignored the rude journalist's gibes and answered his questions as politely as possible. A good

spooky story would bring the crowds in, but, of course, they did not believe in any tales of a curse.

"Let me have a good look at his nibs," the reporter said, elbowing his way roughly through the small crowd. He walked directly up to the case, lowered his head until his own bulbous nose was nearly touching the swathed face of the ancient corpse.

"Hey," he said. "It's almost like these eyes are real, isn't it?"

Those were the reporter's last words. He suddenly gasped, caught at his throat, and crumpled to the floor. Medical examiners later declared that he had suffered a heart attack.

Mr. Cavendish, the official photographer of the British Museum, went about his task of immortalizing the mummy on film in a very methodical manner. He had photographed just about every kind of artifact there was to photograph, and Mummy Number 12 held no terrors for him.

Twenty four hours after he had photographed the remains of the high priest, Cavendish became ill from a strange disease which his physicians were never able to clearly diagnose. He was dead within a very few days.

The skeptics tried their best to discredit any connection between the mummy and the mysterious sudden deaths, but museum officials could find no volunteer photographers to attempt another experiment with Mummy Number 12.

Then, as if the ancient high priest had grown weary of the annoying tactics of modern man, the remains mysteriously burst into flames, almost completely destroying its wrappings.

Had the power of some age-old curse somehow "short-circuited" itself, or had the high priest chosen self-immolation to being poked at by scientists and flashed at by photographers?

THE CURSE OF THE DEADLY WEDDING GOWN

Pretty Lorna Mae Eberle had worked long hours hand-sewing her lovely wedding dress. "See," she told her older sister Carol, "it's an exact copy of the one that Mother wore."

Mrs. Eberle had wanted her daughters to be married in her wedding gown, but only six months before, a terrible fire had not only destroyed the cherished gown, but had taken their beautiful mother as well.

Carol was unimpressed, but then she was never moved by any emotions other than anger and envy toward her much more attractive younger sister. She could hardly tolerate Lorna's presence now that the man she had always loved and admired had asked Lorna to marry him.

"Why?" she had cried at night into her pillow. "Why would he choose Lorna instead of me?"

If anyone had asked the prospective groom that question, he would have stated without hesitation that he had not been moved by physical considerations alone. It was Lorna's pleasant, cheery disposition and her willingness to work hard without complaint that had won his heart. Life on a North Dakota farm was hard in the 1930's, and while it did a man's ego good to have a beautiful wife, it was more important that she had the kind of grit and gravel to hold up under rugged living conditions.

Perhaps it was Lorna's physical strength that led to her death. If she had complained of the terrible pain in her abdomen sooner, she might not have died of a burst appendix. Later, there were some rather ugly stories whispered about that claimed Lorna had asked Carol to summon a doctor but that the older sister had gone into town and spent her time shopping, rather than fetching a physician. The stories went on to tell how when Carol finally returned to the farm without a doctor and found

her sister burning with fever, she loaded her into the Model A and transported her into town over the bumpiest, ruttiest roads she could find.

No one could say whether or not these stories were really true, but what happened after the funeral completely scandalized the small rural community and was eclipsed in shock value only by what occurred just a bit later.

"Ben Berg," Carol said to the sorrowing groom who had just lost his bride, "you're a widower with three motherless children back on your farm. You courted me for nearly a year and almost asked me to marry you before you asked Lorna. What do you say now? Do you want to marry me now that Lorna is dead?"

Friends and relatives were shocked by Carol's indecent proposal over the body of her dead sister. An aunt tried to shush her, but Carol shook off the woman's desperate hands.

"Make up your mind fast, Ben Berg," she said, raising her voice. "There are those three children alone on the farm and a summer of hard work coming up. I may complain more than Lorna would, but I'm bigger and stronger, and I can outwork that lazy farmhand you've got out there now."

Ben shook his head. "Carol . . . it's . . . it's too early to discuss this."

The bereaved man walked away from her, but Carol was confident that he would be making an early decision to marry her.

"Wait," she said to the undertaker, who was preparing to seal Lorna's coffin. "I want to take off her wedding dress."

"But Carol," her father protested, "it was Lorna's wish that she be buried in that gown."

"She won't have use for it in the earth," Carol snapped. "A shroud will do as well."

Mr. Eberle had married late and had become bent with age and hard work. He was no match for a domineering daughter less than a third his age. He turned his back and begged Lorna's forgiveness, while Carol divested the corpse of its lovely gown.

It seemed as though Carol would have her way through

the sheer effort of her tasteless, tactless, but indomitable, will. Ben Berg asked her to marry him less than a month after Lorna's death.

On a hot Sunday in mid-July, Carol and Ben stood before a minister to take their marriage vows. The temperature in the small wooden church was oppressive. Everyone was perspiring freely in his "Sunday-go-to-meeting" clothes.

Then Carol began to clutch at her throat and gasp. Could it be that the woman with the iron will was going to faint at the altar in the manner of the most demure of brides?

No, she was strangling! Her eyes bugged from their sockets and rolled wildly. Her protruding tongue seemed to be trying to lap air down her constricted throat.

By the time her bodice had been opened, Carol Eberle lay dead before the altar.

The town doctor theorized that the wedding gown with its high neck had absorbed some embalming fluid from the corpse of Lorna, which it had enshrouded for three days. Carol's profuse perspiring had drawn the poison into her open pores and the deadly fluid had killed her, the doctor concluded.

Most people in the small North Dakota town didn't buy the doc's theory, though. They believed that Lorna's spirit had returned to exact revenge on her sinful sister.

HEX OF THE PHANTOM UNDERTAKER

For some reason that may never be adequately explained, some families acquire a paranormal manifestation that comes to announce the death of its members. In numerous instances, these family harbingers of doom were set in motion by an ancient malediction or curse that was pronounced upon a long-dead ancestor.

Not long ago, this author received a letter from a Mrs. D.C.F. from Sioux City, Iowa, who told of such a manifestation which occurs in the family of her husband.

"Seven years ago, I was preparing breakfast one morning when I was startled to see a tall, gaunt-looking man dressed in black suddenly walk into my kitchen. I had all I could do to stifle a scream. He had piercing blue eyes and a rather sardonic smile that broke just above a pointed chin.

" 'How did you get in here?' I demanded. 'And what do you want?'

"In sonorous tones the man told me that he had walked in the front door and that he wanted Bert, my husband. I told him that Bert was still upstairs getting dressed for work and that he had better get out or I would call the cops. He chuckled and said that he would be back. The toaster popped up, startled me, and made me glance behind my back. When I turned around to face the interloper once again, he had vanished.

"When I told Bert about the intruder, he became very pale and questioned me as to the most minute details of the strange visit.

" 'And he said he wanted me?' Bert kept asking over and over. 'My God! It must be the old undertaker.'

"When I asked Bert what he meant, he mumbled something about how he was going to die soon. He barely ate any breakfast. His hands shook terribly when he drank his coffee and juice. He kissed me deeply, warmly, when

he left for work. I never saw my husband alive again. He was killed instantly in a head-on collision seven minutes after he left the house."

Mrs. D.C.F. later told her mother-in-law about the manifestation of the darkly-garbed man that had appeared in her kitchen on the morning of Bert's death. The older woman nodded her head knowingly and told Mrs. D.C.F. of the phantom undertaker that had been coming to call away male members of the F. family for the past seven generations. According to family legend, a brutish ancestor had beaten an undertaker to death in a drunken rage and had received the man's dying curse that he would personally come to take away every male member of his murderer's line.

"Five years later," Mrs. D.C.F. writes, "my son Jack wrote to me from college to tell me of a peculiar dream he had had of a tall man dressed in black who had walked into the dorm room one morning. 'When I asked him what he wanted,' Jack said, 'He just said, You, Jack, you.'

"I wept when I read the letter," Mrs. D.C.F. recalls. "Why would Jack have to die so young? He never received the cheery letter that I had forced myself to write to reassure him. He died in a freak accident during football practice three days after he had written to me.

"My older son, Frank, has just returned from Viet Nam without a visit from the phantom undertaker. I'm pretty certain that his grandmother has now told him the legend. Although he returned from frontline action unscathed, he knows that some day the grim figure in black will call for him."

THE TALISMAN WITH THE PROTECTING LIGHT

One of my correspondents, whom we shall name Mrs. Santore, wrote to share a most interesting experience with me.

During World War II, Mrs. Santore was living with her parents in Dallas, Texas, while her soldier husband was stationed in the Pacific. One night Mrs. Santore was returning from work when she heard the sound of footsteps following her. Glancing quickly over her shoulder, she saw a tall, rough-looking man moving rapidly toward her.

"I hated to think it, but I could read that man's thoughts," Mrs. Santore writes. "I was young and attractive . . . and alone. I started to quicken my pace. I had two blocks to go to the bus stop. I thought if I could make it there, there might be some people who would help me.

"There were few streetlights in that section and no open stores. I swear that I actually heard the man laughing. He knew he had me as surely as a cat stalks a mouse.

"Then I remembered the strange talisman that my husband had given me just before he went into the service. 'Just rely on this if you ever need help,' he had told me as he placed it around my neck.

"I had heard others say that my husband's people were black magicians and witches. I had laughed at such stories and it would not have mattered to me if such tales were true. I loved my husband and he was away defending his country just like so many other good American boys.

"I concentrated on the talisman around my neck, and I even reached up to stroke it beneath my blouse. Suddenly, a strange, brilliant light surrounded me. I felt confident, powerful, fearless. My attacker had been but a few steps behind me, and now I turned to face him.

"He crouched down on one knee, put up his arms to cover his eyes, as if he were blinded by the brilliance of the mysterious light. He was so near to me he could easily

have touched me by stretching out his arm, but he could not remove his arms from his squinting eyes. I walked on in peace, leaving my assailant cowering on his knees.

"My husband returned safely from the war and I have often asked him to explain what strange power lies hidden in the protective talisman. He only smiles at my questions and advises me to continue to wear it always."

THE JILTED LOVER WHO HEXED LOVER'S LANE

Back in the 1890's, twenty-year-old Enos Kay of Egypt Pike, Ohio, suffered a bitter disappointment in love. He had worked hard and scrimped and saved for two years so that he might marry the beautiful Alvira. He wasn't going to give her a mean life. He was going to have plenty of money in the bank when he carried her across the threshold.

Then, a week before the wedding, Enos made the terrible mistake of taking Alvira to a church picnic. A handsome, smooth-talking young fellow named Brown was there, and he was attracted to Alvira like a steel nail to a magnet. And in spite of her decent upbringing and her plighted troth to Enos, Alvira couldn't help herself. She felt a strong pull to Mr. Brown's magnet, too. Two nights later, Alvira eloped with the stranger named Brown.

The note that they found beside Enos Kay's body literally dripped hatred and venom from a festering heart. Just wasn't no sense to life and love, the suicide note declared. A man could work and save for a woman and still be betrayed like none of it mattered. A man who spent his time sparking with a gal was a blame fool, Enos pronounced, and his ghost was going to haunt any fool lovers who stopped on Timmon's bridge until Judgment Day!

That Saturday night following Enos Kay's suicide, the lovers who spooned on Timoin's Bridge, the local trysting spot, were harassed by something eerie from out of the Unknown. Buggy tops slammed down mysteriously. Horses snorted with fear and stamped their hooves nervously.

On the next Saturday night, two lovers swore that they saw a gray, faintly glowing cloud in which the features of Enos Kay were plainly visible.

Thereafter, according to local residents, lovers who dared spark on Timmon's bridge could be certain of hav-

ing their buggy tops slammed down, their horses spooked, or their wheels broken. Only buggies containing sweethearts were ever bothered by the ghost of the embittered lover, who apparently kept his promise to hex lover's lane.

THE PHANTOM LOVER WHO CURSED A PLAYBOY

During the eighteenth century there lived a rake by the name of Lord Lyttleton, who practiced the playboy philosophy to the hilt. Love them, use them, leave them was the credo by which he conducted his numerous affairs.

In one of his more disreputable escapades, Lord Lyttelton seduced a young married woman, Mrs. Dawson, in order to lay his greedy, irresponsible hands on her dowry so that he might pay off some gambling debts. After he had succeeded in his siege of seduction, he brutally left the woman alone with a broken home, a broken heart, and oppressive pangs of guilt. Unable to bear her shame and dishonor, Mrs. Dawson committed suicide.

The poor woman's inglorious death did not end her involvement with the shameless lord, however. Her apparition began to appear to him at regular intervals, a fact attested to by such famous contemporaries as Samuel Johnson and James Boswell, and, later, in an account by Sir Walter Scott.

On the evening of Thursday, November 25, 1779, Lord Lyttleton invited a few guests to spend the weekend at his country home. Since things would be dull until the guests arrived and because he was quite tired from his day's labor, he decided to get a good night's sleep in preparation of the weekend revelries. Lord Lyttleton always slept well at his country estate. For some reason the accusing phantom of Mrs. Dawson did not haunt him there.

The rakish lord had not been sleeping long, however, before the sound of his bed curtains rustling and parting told him that he had received a most unwelcome and definitely uninvited guest. He opened his eyes to behold the clear and seemingly solid figure of Mrs. Dawson standing at his bedside. The apparition was so distinct that he could make out her every feature.

Then the phantom was speaking in a low, hushed voice,

the first time that she had made utterance in the several years regimen of regular appearances. "My Lord Lyttleton, on the third midnight following, you will die. At last I will be avenged!"

Her malediction pronounced, the apparition disappeared, leaving the confused and admittedly frightened rake alone in his bedchamber. A few moments passed before the stunned man realized that the bedroom clock was tolling midnight. He had forty-eight hours to live! Lord Lyttleton tried to regain his composure, to explain away the phantom figure of Mrs. Dawson. He told himself that he must remain calm.

When his guests arrived that next day, he told them of the manifestation and the malediction and tried to treat it all in a light-hearted manner. "Let us not be gloomy, my friends," he laughed. "I invited you here to wine and dine in a gloriously pagan manner, and that is what we shall do!"

Friday was a monument to one man's titanic effort to occupy his thoughts. Lord Lyttleton led his guests on a mad merry-go-round of hunting to hounds, eating and drinking to stupefaction, and wenching and loving to exhaustion.

By the Saturday night dinner hour, however, Lord Lyttleton was beginning to become a bit nervous and jumpy. He was drinking a bit too much, laughing a bit too loudly, making a bit too much of an effort to be the properly hedonistic host.

"I hope I can be with you for breakfast," he said in a loud voice, punctuated by coarse laughter.

"Don't worry," a friend encouraged him, "you will outlast the curse and be rid of that gloomy she-ghost forever!"

"Why not fool her?" another friend suggested. "Why don't you set the hands of all the clocks forward an hour and let midnight come sixty minutes earlier?"

Lord Lyttleton thought that suggestion to have been born of genius. He commanded his servants to move the hands of all clocks ahead one hour.

When the clocks bonged out midnight at eleven o'clock, Lord Lyttleton and all of his guests held their breath and mentally counted the chimes. After the last chime had echoed into nothingness and Lord Lyttleton still sat

flushed with life, the assembled guests let go with a lusty cheer. Lord Lyttleton laughed and pranced jubilantly about the dining room.

"Now let us really have a party!" one of his friends shouted merrily.

Lord Lyttleton smiled, raised a hand for silence. "My friends, you are free to conduct yourselves as you wish. My house, my servants, my food, my liquor is at your disposal. But I feel as if a mighty chain has been loosened from my breast. At last I am free of that damned haunting specter. I have had few restful nights these many years, and tonight I choose to enjoy the luxury of a good night's sleep."

Lord Lyttleton remained for only a few moments, chatting quietly with friends, then he called to his valet to bring him a dose of rhubarb extract in his bedchamber. With those words, Lord Lyttleton excused himself with the promise of special pleasures that next day to celebrate his emancipation from bondage to the dead.

The lord's valet was kept busy for several minutes, catering to the demands of his master's voracious guests. "I must excuse myself," he said at last. "Lord Lyttleton makes it a practice to have his rhubarb extract each night upon retiring. He's apt to be angry if I tary longer."

Within a few moments after the valet's departure, the guests were stunned to hear frightened screams issuing from the upstairs bedchamber of Lord Lyttleton. A deputation rushed up to investigate and were startled to share in the valet's discovery of a dead Lord Lyttleton lying across the bed pillows, his sightless eyes widened in terror, his open mouth fixed in a soundless scream.

The hands of Lord Lyttleton's bedchamber clock were at midnight. The servants had forgotten to set that one clock ahead.

The doctor who later examined the lord's body ruled out death by unnatural causes. The rakish lord had apparently died from shock when he heard the bedchamber clock pealing out his death toll. It appeared that the phantom Mrs. Dawson had returned to work her revenge upon the lover who had so ruthlessly betrayed her.

SCIENTISTS SAY HEXES REALLY WORK!

Anthropologist W. B. Cannon found himself firmly convinced of the reality of death through voodoo-style hexing after an exhaustive study of the macabre subject. In his investigations, Cannon directed himself to the question: "How can an ominous and persistent state of fear end the life of a man?"

The powerful emotion of fear places great stress upon elemental parts of the nervous system and the endocrine apparatus—the so-termed "sympathetico-ardrenal system." Cannon points out that if the body's internal environment continues to remain poised for flight or mobilized for action for a considerable period of time without physical release, dire consequences may result. According to Cannon's theory, death by hexing would appear to result from a state of shock due to a terrible fear which stimulated persistent over activity of the sympathetico-adrenal system. A continuous production of adrenaline and a rapid depletion of the adrenal corticosteroid hormones would thereby result in a dramatic reduction in blood pressure which would result in death.

Cannon maintained that death by hexing was brought about by extreme fear and exhaustion and was essentially a psychosomatic phenomenon, but, nonetheless, a real phenomenon produced by "shocking emotional stress" which triggered deeply ingrained fears and a state of alarm about dying.

Dr. J. B. Rhine, famous parapsychologist, related the case of the university professor's son who saw the apparition of a deceased friend that told him he would die at 3:00 P.M. on December 5th. Everyone, including his family doctor, laughed at the teenager's grim vision. The boy remained convinced, and on December 4th, gave his family and friends farewell gifts. He arose on December 5th, ate a hearty breakfast, and appeared to be in the best of

health. At ten minutes past three, the seventeen-year-old died of cardiac paralysis.

Doctors at City Hospital in Baltimore related the details of a case wherein a woman had come to them claiming that her life was doomed by a hex. According to the distraught young lady, she would be dead within three days. She told the doctors that she had been one of three babies delivered by a midwife on Friday the 13th. The midwife told the mothers that she had placed a hex on the three girls: one would die before her sixteenth birthday, the second before her twenty-first birthday, and the third before her twenty-third birthday. The first girl had died accidentally before her sixteenth birthday, according to the dictates of the alleged hex. The second girl had been killed by a stray bullet as she entered a tavern to celebrate her twenty-first birthday.

"I am that third girl," the woman told the doctors. "In three days it will be my twenty-third birthday and I am doomed."

Two days later, the woman died after an agonizing episode of "severe apprehension and profuse sweating." The autopsy revealed a number of serious physiological disorders, but the physicians agreed that the woman's terror had hastened her death.

Dr. J. C. Barker, writing in his book *Scared to Death,* considers the above-mentioned case a classic example of death resulting from auto-suggestion. "Initially the subject develops the notion that something is going to happen; then this idea operates through auto-suggestion so as to bring about the very thing which was anticipated," Dr. Barker says.

The concentration of malignant thoughts by a witch or a hexer toward a victim may also bring about actual illness or accident. Dr. Berthold E. Schwarz, writing in the November, 1967, issue of the *Journal* of the Medical Society of New Jersey, details numerous casses in which a telepathic link-up could be demonstrated as having been involved in a sick person inducing psychosomatic developments in a previously healthy person. Dr. Schwarz includes one case wherein a ". . . patient's incapacitating psychosomatic illness might have been induced (or at least strongly influenced) by a 'sick' relationship with a telepathic mother."

"I have reported a series of 504 presumed parent-child telepathic episodes showing many possible telesomatic (Dr. Schwarz's abbreviation for *telepathically-induced psychosomatic state*) responses," he writes. "In these, it seems as if the parent's or the child's thoughts caused involuntary physical reactions in sender or receiver." Dr. Schwarz feels that telepathy may offer a fruitful avenue of research regarding the understanding of psychosomatic illness.

If an ill child or parent can unconsciously produce similar physical reactions in an unconscious receiver of the involuntarily transmitted telepathic impulse, it requires little fantasy to theorize that a powerful mind might have the power to *voluntarily* transmit malignant impulses to a selected victim and thereby bring about illness in a previously healthy body.

Dr. Harry W. Martin of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, together with one of his students, Cervando Martinez, quizzed seventy-five Mexican-American housewives regarding their knowledge of the ways of hex, black magic, and folk medicines. The researchers found that seventy of the women were not only well versed in the lore connected with *mal ojo* (evil eye), *susto* (magical fright), and *mal puesto,* but they were prepared to combat such evil devices with folk magic cures.

The *Dallas Times-Herald,* in a report on the researcher's investigation, said the majority of women told the psychiatrists that those with "light" blood were most susceptible to the black power of the *mal ojo.* They believed that the blood of the victim was heated by "electricity" in the vision of the hexer who looks upon him with hatred or covetousness.

The hex, *mal puesto,* could be laid by anyone who had mastered the intricacies of witchcraft, the women believed. *Mal puesto* could be relayed to the intended victim through his food, through magic done to his photograph, or through spells and incantations performed over his effigy. The women were a bit vague on the symptoms of the hex, but they enumerated such effects as uncontrolled urination, sudden attacks of screaming or crying, and convulsive seizures.

Dr. Martin and Mr. Martinez learned that the women interviewed had little faith in modern medical men to

combat illness that had been created by the hex of a powerful witch. The Mexican-American housewives stated that they had full confidence in doctors for any conventional malady, but they relied on *curanderos* to deal with any physical blight brought on by a hex.

HEX POWERS OF INDONESIA'S WITCHDOCTORS

Christianity has brought many changes to the outlying villages in Indonesia, but the old beliefs remain. Some years ago, one of this author's correspondents met a young man from an Indonesian village on the island of Samosir, located in the middle of Lake Toba in Sumatra. The young man, who was in the United States on a scholarship to study the English language, told my friend that, in his village, the people gave lip service to the Christian God, but *mamele* (worship) of the old gods was still observed with fervor.

John, as we shall call him, said that there were still witchdoctors in abundance who practiced black magic. "Many of the things that I have seen would be difficult for an American to believe in," he said. "You live here with your fast cars and your concrete highways and sidewalks. You have removed yourself from the primitive and the elemental. It is in such an environment that the black powers are most potent."

John remembered the time when, as a teenager attending high school, the ugliest boy in the class fell in love with the most attractive girl. Although such a phenomenon occurs on a global basis, what transpired would be judged most uncommon by most Western standards.

The boy knew that he could hardly rely upon his looks to help him court the lovely miss, but he had access to a most powerful compensatory force. His uncle was a *datu,* a witchdoctor.

One day during a study period, John noticed the love-smitten boy stretch across the aisle to pluck a few loose hairs that lay on the girl's blouse. John was at that time unable to discuss homeopathic or mimetic magic, but he did know about *panusaion* (hexing) by shaping a figure in the likeness of a victim and incorporating bits of hair,

blood, nail clippings into the image so that an unbreakable bond might be formed between the doll and the victim.

The next day the girl was absent from school. That evening John learned that the young beauty lay in a coma. She would take no food, no drink. Her eyes were open wide, yet unseeing. Over and over she repeated the name of the *datu*'s nephew, the ugly boy whose attentions she had rebuffed.

Within a week the girl was emaciated. No food had passed her lips and her parents had been able to force down only a few sips of water. The medical missionaries and their Western nostrums were helpless to combat the *panusaion,* the terrible hex that had possessed the girl.

The desperate father sought succor from the ancient gods of his people. Other *datus* proved ineffective, so he knew he must seek out the uncle of the eager suitor who had levied the hex.

The girl's father sought the witchdoctor out in his smokey hut and begged him to lift the hex. The *datu* remained impassive until the father agreed to pay handsomely for his calling back the evil spirits.

Soon the girl was smiling weakly in her mother's arms and calling feebly for rice and water. When she had completely recovered from her strange malady, the *datu* and his nephew appeared and repeated the young man's wish to marry the village beauty.

The father shook his head. His daughter was beautiful, clean-limbed and sweet-voiced, he said. She could have the pick of any man in the village. The *datu*'s eyes narrowed, and he reminded the proud father that the young woman had not been so lovely in her delirium.

"The threat was obvious," John said. "The *datu* had hexed the lovely girl once and he was prepared to work his evil on her again if need be. There was nothing for the father to do but to accept the proposal. His daughter would have to go through marriage with the triumphant and grotesquely leering boy."

My friend asked John if the hex would have worked if the girl and her parents had not believed in the *datu*'s powers.

"Perhaps not," John answered. "But the body cannot be cured without the mind. I have seen instances where a

datu has cursed the footprint of a man in the village, and I have seen orthodox doctors amputate the rotting flesh of the man's limb until they ran out of leg and the man died. The power of the *datu* over the minds of the people seems incredible to those who maintain a veneer of sophistication, but for millions of people, the power of the hex is very real."

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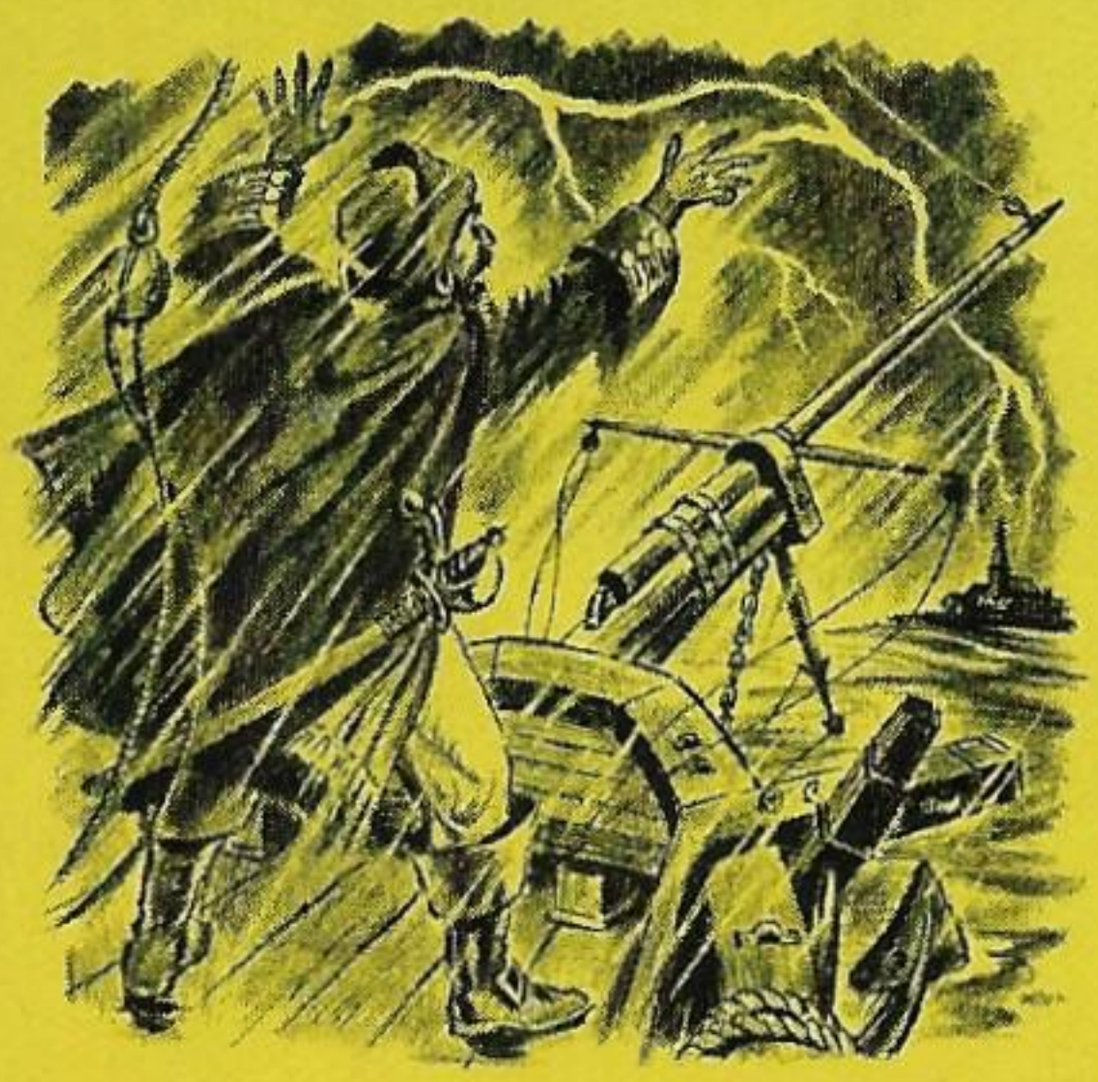

A pirate hexes
a hurricane haunt

A wronged woman—
her wrathful place of rest